THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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AN APPRECIATION OF ROBERT HATCH KENNETT

(Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge, 1903—1932).

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THOSE who were privileged to belong to one of Dr Kennett's Old Testament classes went through one of those rare experiences which not only make an impression at the time but are recognized ever afterwards as turning points. Under his guidance, we turned a corner and had a vision of a land the very existence of which had been unsuspected, and the mental picture thus created for us transformed our entire view of those things which had been familiar before. It is not too much to say that contact with Kennett left nothing unchanged.

To what was this power due, the man or the message? The answer is 'both,' and therein lies our difficulty and, now that his personality has been removed from us, our task. As with all great men, personality and message are inextricably mingled, yet they must, to some extent and in some fashion, be distinguished, lest we should now lose the message because, worn out with having lived, Dr. Kennett has himself passed on.

Whether facing a class or talking in private conclave, on a country walk or in front of a study fire, Dr. Kennett was always

great as a teacher, and his success was independent of the intellectual position of the learner. He was just as sympathetic, as clear and as charming to the novice as to the advanced student. The secret of this quite unusual success was the same as the secret of his success as a Biblical scholar — it lay in his intense interest in all sorts and conditions of men. It is given to very few to be at once a teacher and an originator, and there was, at one time, a serious danger lest Kennett should be docketed — classed — as a brilliant exponent rather than a brilliant investigator. He was human enough to be both, and his success as both was due to his intense interest in men.

Few Biblical scholars have been so richly endowed with Historical imagination. There is always a tendency to regard books as so many writings, documents, and much can thus be learnt from the study of them. Much, but not all, for the ultimate secrets can only be revealed to one who can see the man behind the book, the mind behind the manuscript. Such vision was Kennett's. It was not enough to show by an examination of the words of the Pentateuch that it was composite, and that it could not be ascribed to Moses; not enough to disentangle the literary sources represented by the symbols J, E, D and P, and set them out in their proper order. Kennett made us think of the authors as men of like passions with us, and he forced us to ask why these men were impelled to write as they did—why they were impelled to write at all. Even in our own times, when writing is so easy and printing is so cheap, men do not write books unless they are driven to it by some motive or other. The motive may be hope of gain or fame, but at least it is there. In ancient times motives must have been proportionately greater because the obstacles to writing and to publication were so much larger.

Kennett sought for and discovered these motives for the publication of the various books of the Old Testament, and, in so doing, found himself at variance with the Wellhausen scheme of dates. It is the merit of Kennett's contribution to Pentateuchal criticism that it accounts not only for the writing of the four documents of the Pentateuch but for their far more remarkable combination. Yet so strong is conservatism among Biblical scholars that for years hardly anyone would accept an amend-

ment of Wellhausen, although to do so enormously simplifies the whole problem of Old Testament criticism.

Some of us often felt impatient at what seemed to us the injustice of the treatment measured out to Kennett's work. Not so Kennett—he was amazingly modest and yet quietly confident that victory was assured. Conversion is still slow; authors continue to copy the views of their predecessors, and there are few who imitate the nobler Jews of Beroea and go back to the Scriptures to see whether these things be so. Yet the process of conversion is at work, and perhaps it is better that it should be slow: the ground won can be consolidated and its defenders more perfectly prepared for counter-attacks. A quick victory for Kennett would have been followed by a reaction, which we may now be spared.

Along with his discovery of new dates for the documents of the Pentateuch, and as part and parcel of it, there came Kennett's revolutionary teaching on the subject of sacrifice, and it is in this part of the field that the debt of Theology to him is greatest. If his views on sacrifice be accepted, as we believe they must be, the effects will be far-reaching and will be found to extend not only over the Old but also into the New Testament. They are so important that any appreciation of Kennett's work must be inadequate without a brief summary of them.

The central point may be taken to be *Isaiah* i, 12: 'Who hath required *this* at your hand?' with the answer, *Micah* vi, 8: 'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' The word 'sacrifice' is misleading, for, except in the case of the whole burnt-offering so contemptuously dealt with by Jeremiah (vi, 21), nothing of value was surrendered to the god. At best it was communion, at worst propitiation, and it always tended, like so many other forms of ritual, to be offered as a substitute for obedience to God's will in the spheres of social righteousness and personal holiness.

We do not offer animals on the altars of our churches to-day, but, before Kennett, it was supposed that God condescended to accept such forms of worship from people in a primitive condition whose ideas of Him were in an elementary stage. No doubt this might have been so, but—in the case of the Hebrews—it

was *not*. Moses had taught them something different, something purer, higher and better, but they adopted Canaanite religious rites when they settled down as agriculturists in Canaan. But for the prophets, the true religion of Moses would have been submerged, and, in spite of the prophets, the great compromise of 621 B.C. was accepted, and—strangest of all—under the influence of Ezekiel (whose work was often compared by Kennett with that of Augustine of Hippo in shaping the Roman Church) this compromise came to be regarded by subsequent ages as the work of Moses himself.

'How long halt ye between two opinions?' was also the cry of prophets far greater and more important than Elijah, such as Amos and Hosea—either God is pleased with the fat of rams or he is not. Josiah, being a statesman as well as a reformer, continued to halt and gave to both sides his blessing, not unmixed with reproof. The Law of the One Sanctuary was statesmanlike but illogical. It could hardly have been the one without the other, and it is unlikely that any other Law would have met with so much success; but it could not satisfy the prophetical party in Israel.

Kennett thus brought out two very important points which greatly clarify our knowledge of this period.

The first is that all the five pre-exilic prophets—Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah—were utterly opposed, root and branch, to the sacrificial system of the priests, and that they claimed the teaching of Moses in support of their attack. And the second is that *all* the four documents of the Pentateuch, J. E. D and P, are priestly and therefore on the crucial question of sacrifice are anti-prophetic.

It is good news to any teacher of the Old Testament that he need no longer strain the theological doctrine of the Divine Condescension to cover the savageries of Samuel, Elijah and Elisha, and that he is free at last to assign the supreme authority to the teaching of Amos and Hosea, Micah and Isaiah.

This prophetic teaching about sacrifice obviously does not end with the Old Testament, and Kennett was always anxious that its full import should be realized. One of the most brilliant little books that he ever wrote was on *The Last Supper*, and, at the present writer's last interview with him, he was insistent

that no theory of the Atonement could possibly be acceptable if it involved any suggestion of the possibility of a change in God's attitude towards man. The Father was always ready to go out to meet the Prodigal. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.'

This book — all too short as it is for the expert scholar — deserves to be read by every member of our Churches. Although it is obviously the result of a ripe scholarship, it is written so simply that the least erudite reader can hardly fail to grasp its meaning. It was designed as 'an appeal to those who are unable to accept the Roman or Anglo-Catholic teaching in the Holy Communion to put forward a less negative and more constructive statement of their faith,' and carries forward the Old Testament argument on sacrifice to its logical conclusion in the New. With his profound knowledge of Hebrew literature, Kennett is able, in this book, to brush aside the accretions of ages and to reconstruct the scene in the Upper Room with a vividness that must command admiration for the author's historical insight and will ensure for most the acceptance of his conclusions. These conclusions are of such importance for us that a somewhat lengthy quotation from *The Lord's Supper* is justified :

> 'What appears to be the meaning of the condensed record of His [Christ's] words, in view of the circumstances in which they were spoken, can best be set forth in a paraphrase :
>
> Convinced that My mission can only end in My death, I *desired* to celebrate this coming passover with you. . . . But it is not to be. The blow which I have long anticipated will fall sooner than I expected. I shall not be able to eat the passover with you to-morrow, for I tell you plainly, I shall not eat it again in this life, although I know that the victory which it symbolizes will be celebrated in the Kingdom of God. But in spite of all this, the desire which I came up to Jerusalem to gratify need not be disappointed. That for which the Passover stands is not true only on one night of the year; for those who trust God know that He is with them always, and that at all times He can deliver them from the sting of death, and can give them strength for that through which He leads them. And therefore by faith we may have the same blessing at this our last supper together, ordinary meal though it is, as if it were actually the passover feast. We may indeed make it our passover. There is no magical efficacy either in the passover blood sprinkled on the altar or in the flesh of the passover lamb eaten at home. It is the thing symbolized, not the symbol, which edifies, and if that be apprehended, the precise character of the symbol itself is of small account. This bread will serve as well for our

spiritual strengthening as the actual flesh of the passover lamb. This wine, "the blood of the grape," will represent to us the passover blood. . . . .

And since I have come to help you, by the teaching of my life and the example of my death, to have this saving trust in God, you may regard Me as your Passover Lamb. We have agreed that this bread shall represent to us the passover flesh, and this wine the passover blood — that is, if I am the true Passover Lamb, My Flesh and My Blood. Take, eat, therefore; this is My Body; drink ye all of this cup; this is My Blood. And as the passover in Egypt was the beginning of a new relation between the Lord and Israel, or, in Hebrew language, a "covenant," which was afterwards ratified by sacrificial blood, this wine will also be to you a symbol of that new and better relation with God which will be theirs who come with faith through the crisis of My death. . . .'

But, if these new views on sacrifice constitute the main, they are not the only contribution of Kennett to the study of the Bible. Another point, almost as important, upon which he insisted was that all the writers of the New Testament, with the single exception of St. Luke, were Hebrews, and that without some knowledge of the Hebrew mind and its usual mode of expression, misunderstanding of the New Testament was hardly to be avoided. Hence his insistence on 'Hebrew Idiom,' the full significance of which has not yet been realized by most of us.

In Professor Kennett's hands even well-known and accepted views take on fresh life, while new views are continually being discovered. This is not the place for an exhaustive examination, but no one who has been through one of his courses will be likely to forget such things as the dating of D after and not before the Reform of Josiah; the meaning and historical setting of the Psalms; the reconstruction of the Priestly Decalogue, which he assigned to the reign of Jehu; and, perhaps most important of all, his interpretation of the *Book of Job* and of the Servant Passages of *Isaiah*.

Everything came alive in his hands, the reason being that he was so much alive himself — staunchest of friends, tireless in the service of others, immensely sympathetic to all those in trouble, whether that trouble was brought about by misfortune or by wrong-doing, and whether the sufferers were rich or poor, learned or simple.

IN MEMORIAM
ROBERT HATCH KENNETT

Preached in Ely Cathedral, 2nd Sunday in Lent, 21st February, 1932, by PROFESSOR J. M. CREED, Canon of Ely.

'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'—*Micah* vi, 8.

IT appears to be a law of life that ideas which are to move the hearts and lives of men can only win their way to power through conflict and contradiction. It has been so in religion. Revelation did not arrive ready-made. The prophet comes to be possessed by a definite and intelligible conception of God and of God's demands, but this is always set against the background of some prevailing body of practice and belief which the prophet, in the light of his commission, feels called upon to repudiate. The revelation is made within some pre-existing body of ideas, not in a vacuum, and thus it always comes to bear a negative as well as a positive aspect 'I will have mercy,' we read in Hosea, 'and NOT sacrifice.' 'Shall I come before the Lord,' asks Micah, 'with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? . . . He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'

This is not only so at the first birth of an idea. The original negation may come to be of merely historical interest, but if the original positive idea lives on, other forms of negation will take its place. For a living idea is always in contact with other forces to which it must adjust itself anew. St. John speaks of our faith as 'the victory that overcometh the world.' If there is a true sense in which that victory was won once and for all by Jesus Christ, there is another sense in which the conquest is always proceeding. God has shewn us, so Micah says, what is good; he has shewn us how simple yet all-sufficient are His demands; but we only learn how good the good is when we have set it against some rival claimant power, and have secured its supremacy over the mixed interests of the world.

I have chosen these words of Micah for my text to-night

because it appeared to me that no other words could be more appropriate to the subject which has been set me by the event which to-day must be in all our thoughts. At nine o'clock last Monday morning, Robert Hatch Kennett, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge and Senior Canon of our Chapter, 'passed over to the other side.' He had been in poor health for some time past, but the end came with startling suddenness. A fortnight ago yesterday, he attended a Chapter Meeting and joined freely in our discussions. Almost immediately after the meeting he was struck low, and nine days later the end came. Dr. Kennett had lived here as Professor Canon for more than twenty-eight years. He had become, I suppose, one of the best known of the Cathedral Canons and had won the affections of all sorts and conditions of men in Ely. There are probably some here to-night who have known him longer than I have, and who could tell better than I of what he has meant to the common life of Ely. But I think I can help to fill in the picture from another point of view, and I am glad to be able to testify now and in this place to something of what Dr. Kennett has been to generations of Cambridge students. You who knew him here will recognize qualities for which you valued him reappearing in a somewhat different setting. Let me say, then, that to my mind Dr. Kennett was at his greatest in the lecture room. Twenty years ago, when I had just taken my degree, I listened to him on the Prophets in the Hall of Queens' College. The Hall was packed with an audience of enthusiastic undergraduates and Bachelors. Dr. Kennett was a born teacher. He was an enthusiast for his subject and he aroused enthusiasm in his hearers. We were taught to see the Higher Criticism at work—texts compared, analyzed, criticized. But the criticism led on to construction, and we learnt to view the work of the Prophets against the background of the conditions of their time. But there was not only criticism and exposition; there was also recitation. Dr. Kennett used to recite the great Prophetic texts —I can recall now how I heard him recite that opening of the sixth chapter of Micah—first in Hebrew, and then in English, with extraordinary force.

A few years later, when I was a young Fellow of a College, I saw Dr. Kennett in another light. I wanted to learn the elements of Hebrew, and Dr. Kennett most kindly offered to

teach me. He gave me of his best for three hours a week during one Long Vacation. I learnt enough to be able to appreciate something of his mastery of the language, and I can never forget his kindness. He placed himself and his knowledge unreservedly at my disposal. And what he did for me, he has done for countless others.

The Old Testament is not my special study, and it is not for me to assess his original contributions to learning. As a scholar he was resourceful, brilliant, bold — too bold, in the opinion of some. But whether right or wrong his suggestions were almost always illuminating, and even an outsider in Old Testament studies can see that in the criticism of the Pentateuch, as in other matters, he laid his finger on a crucial point.

I must now pass on to say a word about Dr. Kennett as a Churchman. His Churchmanship was an essential element in his personality, and he felt deeply his share in our common responsibility for the Church's welfare. I think it is on this side that it is easiest to misunderstand him. His views on such subjects as the sacraments and the ministry, though in the main they would have excited little notice a hundred years ago, were out of touch with opinions which are widely current in the Church to-day. Dr. Kennett did not gloss the discrepancy. He was determined that the Church of England should not be tied down to views which, he would urge, were false in history and dangerous in practice.

It was perhaps not always obvious how strongly religious was the motive which influenced Dr. Kennett in this matter. It seemed to him that the essentials of religion were at stake. To try to start by defining or discovering the true Church was, in his opinion, to start at the wrong end. The inevitable result of such a method is the erection of artificial barriers. What after all does God require? That is the primary question for every man and every Church. Dr. Kennett had made Micah's answer his own: 'To do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.' And is there then nothing more which should be added? Absolutely nothing. To think of Jesus Christ as adding new requirements is wholly to misconceive His mission. He came to bring God to men and men to God. He is thus the Incarnation of God's word, the fulfilment in his own Person of the Prophetic revelation.

A simple faith, yet a difficult one: difficult because it must be lived by every man and every Church amidst difficulties and complexities. There will ever be temptation to temper justice with respect of persons, mercy with indolence, humility with pretence. Religion, as Micah conceived it, and as Jesus of Nazareth embodied it, is inherently hostile to such corruptions. If, on the other hand—and this was what Dr. Kennett dreaded—if the sacred and inviolable element in religion is held to reside in officials and in rites, the essential religious issue is obscured and religion *may* serve to cover with an odour of sanctity the very perversions which are most odious to God. Micah and the Prophets are needed to safeguard even the *Christian* sacraments.

Dr. Kennett's was a prophetic rather than a philosophic mind. He did not, I think, greatly interest himself in the philosophical problems which are involved in any faith—including that faith of the Prophets and our Lord, which he himself devoutly held. His real mission, as he saw it, was to help to liberate that faith from misconceptions and misunderstandings, and to defend it against perversion. There was nothing of the partisan about him—if by partisan we mean one who takes his lead from a party. He took his own line. In defence of a cause which he had at heart he could hit hard, but the vehemence of his attack did not embitter his personal relations. He was the kindliest and friendliest of men, with a spontaneous interest in human beings of all ages, all sorts and all opinions. Anyone in difficulty or in trouble would be sure of a helping hand from Dr. Kennett, if help was in his power.

I fancy he will live long in local memory. His character was individual and strongly marked. His appearance and his figure were of the kind that one does not forget. But it is a small matter how long a man's name lives after him. For believers it is not the memory of man's personality after death which counts. Sooner or later that memory will fade. Rather it is the faith that though death ends the span of human life, our human life contains within it the seed of a fuller life beyond. With that faith we leave our beloved dead calmly and thankfully in the hands of God.

THE RELIGION OF CHARLES DICKENS

> 'Dickens was essentially a layman, and it is not going too far to say that he did more than perhaps any other English teacher to strengthen the working religion of the great lay world. Others of his time and generation preached far more avowedly the lessons of human kindness and sympathy and self-denial, but the teaching of Dickens went home because these lessons were not formally inculcated but carried along on the wings of a great artistic imagination.'

IN this fine tribute to the work of a great literary artist, the late Sir William Ashley emphasizes what is no doubt the most marked feature in Dickens' religion, namely, its basis in practical ethics. Because this is obvious even to a superficial study of his writings, it has been assumed by some that the great novelist's religion was no more than a kind of Comtism, a 'religion of humanity,' with a veneer of conformity to Anglican rites. But a careful study of his life suggests that, indifferent, even contemptuously indifferent, as he undoubtedly was to the points of doctrine and ritual so popular in his day as subjects for ecclesiastical disputes, this indifference was due to no unthinking Latitudinarianism but to a period in his life of intellectual questioning which left him with the conviction that the ethical element in religion was the only one which afforded a safe basis for conduct.

That Dickens did pass through a period of religious doubt is clearly shown in John Forster's 'Life.' In 1844 Dickens sent his friend an account of a curious dream or vision which he experienced when living at the Pallazzo Peschiere at Genoa. After describing how the spirit of one whom he had dearly loved appeared to him, he writes:

> 'I said, in an agony of haste, lest it should leave me, "What is the true religion?" As it paused a moment without replying, I said—good God, in what an agony of haste lest it should go away!—"You think as I do that the form of religion does not greatly matter if we try to do good? Or," I said, observing that it still hesitated and was moved with the greater compassion for me, "perhaps the Roman Catholic is the best? Perhaps it makes one think of God oftener and believe in Him more steadily?" "For you," said the Spirit, full of such heavenly tenderness for me that I felt as if my heart would break, "for *you* it is the best."'

In commenting on this Forster writes:

> 'It was perhaps natural that he should omit from his own considerations awakened by the dream the very first that would have risen in any mind to which his was intimately known—that it strengthens other evidences, of which there are many in his life, of his not having escaped those trying regions of reflection which most men of thought and all men of genius have at some time to pass through. In such disturbing fancies, during the next year or two, I may add that the book which helped him most was the *Life of Arnold.* "I respect and reverence his memory," he wrote to me, ". . . beyond all expression. I must have that book. Every sentence that you quote from it is the text-book of my faith." '

If Dickens had been conscious of any attraction to Roman Catholicism, which is certainly suggested by the incident of the dream, it was evidently short-lived. Probably his lengthy sojourn in Roman Catholic countries gave him too intimate a knowledge of the ways of the priesthood for the attraction to survive. In his letters he refers with horror to the methods of the Jesuits.

> 'These fellows are—well, never mind,' he writes from Genoa, and proceeds to give an instance of what he calls their "devilry." In a letter from Switzerland he says: "Where the Protestant canton ends and a Catholic canton begins you might separate two perfectly distinct and different conditions of humanity by drawing a line with your stick in the dust of the ground. On the Protestant side neatness, cheerfulness, industry, education, continual aspiration, at least, after better things. On the Catholic side dirt, disease, ignorance, squalor and misery. I have so constantly observed the like of this since I first came abroad that I have a sad misgiving that the religion of Ireland lies as deep at the root of all its sorrows even as English misgovernment and Tory villainy.'

Later he writes:

> 'I don't know any subject upon which this indomitable people have so good a right to a strong feeling as Catholicity—if not as a religion clearly as a means of social degradation. They know what it is . . . their horror of the introduction of Catholic priests and emissaries into their towns seems to me the most rational feeling in the world.'

And again:

> 'If I were a Swiss I would be as steady against the Catholic cantons and the propaganda of Jesuitism as any Radical among them, believing the dissemination of Catholicism to be the most horrible means of political and social degradation left in the world.'

It is very obvious that Dickens' staunch Radicalism and passion for social righteousness is behind all this. He would have nothing of any form of religion, however emotionally or

aesthetically attractive, which proved an obstacle to political liberty and social reform. When, at a later period of his life, he forsook for a time his allegiance to the Church of England to make a trial of Unitarianism, it was because of the stupidity and obscurantism of the Anglican clergy in the matter of national education. On the whole, however, he seems to have been satisfied by Anglicanism. Forster asserts:

> 'Upon essential points he never had any sympathy so strong as with the leading doctrines of the Church of England; to these, as time went on, he found himself able to accommodate all minor difficulties; and the unswerving faith in Christianity itself, apart from sects and schisms, which had never failed him at any period of his life, found expression at its close in the language of his will.'

Certainly Dickens did, in his will, make in a few short sentences a confession of his religious faith:

> 'I commit my soul to the mercy of God through Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I exhort my dear children humbly to try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its broad spirit, and to put no faith in any man's narrow construction of its letter here and there.'

A deeper and more intimate *confessio fidei* is to be found in a letter written in 1868 on the occasion of the departure of his youngest son to Australia:

> 'I write this note to-day because your going is much upon my mind and because I want you to have a few parting words from me to think of now and then at quiet times . . . Never take a mean advantage of anyone in any transaction and never be hard upon people who are in your power. Try to do to others as you would have them do to you, and do not be discouraged if they fail sometimes. It is much better for you that they should fail in obeying the greatest rule laid down by our Saviour than that you should. I put a New Testament among your books for the very same reason and with the very same hope that made me write an easy account of it for you when you were a little child. Because it is the best book that ever was or will be known in the world, and because it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature who tries to be truthful and faithful to duty can possibly be guided. As your brothers have gone away one by one I have written to each such words as I am now writing to you, and have entreated them all to guide themselves by the Book, putting aside the interpretations and inventions of man. You will remember that you have never at home been harassed about religious observances or mere formalities. I have always been anxious not to weary my children with such things before they are old enough to form opinions respecting them. You will therefore understand the better that I now most solemnly impress upon you the truth and beauty of the Christian religion as it came from Christ Himself and the impossibility of your going far wrong if you humbly and heartily respect it. Only one thing more on this head. The more we are in earnest as to feeling it, the less we are disposed

to hold forth about it. Never abandon the wholesome practice of saying your own private prayers night and morning. I have never abandoned it myself, and I know the comfort of it.'

The day before his death, on the 8th of June, 1870, Dickens wrote as follows to a correspondent who had questioned the propriety of some scriptural quotation in *Edwin Drood*:

'I have always striven in my writings to express veneration for the life and lessons of our Saviour; because I feel it; and because I rewrote that history for my children, every one of whom knew it, from having it repeated to them, long before they could read and almost as soon as they could speak. But I have never made proclamation of this from the house-tops.'

When we turn to Dickens' writings and see his treatment of religion as exemplified in his characters, we find that he had more than the average Englishman's horror of hypocrisy and unction. In Mr. Chadband he has pilloried for all time the pompous, self-satisfied, self-indulgent cleric with the endless flow of meaningless verbosity and no single spark of human sympathy or intelligence. Of the same type is Mr. Stiggins, who provided his creator with the opportunity of doing a little sermonizing of his own. He seems to have disliked the 'committee woman,' and he advises her thus, in Mrs. Weller's dying speech:

'I begin to see now, ven it's too late, that if a married voman vishes to be religious, she should begin vith dischargin' her dooties at home, and makin' them as is about her cheerful and happy, and that vile she goes to church or chapel or wot not, at all proper times she should be wery careful not to conwert this sort o' thing into a excuse for idleness and self-indulgence.'

Dickens seems to have detested certain elements in the Nonconformity of his day no less than those aspects of Roman Catholicism referred to in the letters before quoted. In the 1874 edition of the *Pickwick Papers* he says:

'Lest there should be any well-intentioned persons who do not perceive the difference (as some such could not when "Old Mortality" was newly published) between religion and the cant of religion, piety and the pretence of piety, a humble reverence for the great truths of Scripture and an audacious and offensive obtrusion of its letter and not its spirit in the commonest dissensions and meanest affairs of life, let them understand that it is always the latter, and never the former, which is satirized here. Further, that the latter is here satirized as being, according to all experience, inconsistent with the former, impossible of union with it, and one of the most evil and mischievous falsehoods existent in society—whether it establish its headquarters for the time being in Exeter Hall or Ebenezer Chapel or both. It may appear unnecessary to offer a word of observation on so plain a head.

> But it is never out of season to protest against that coarse familiarity with sacred things which is busy on the lip and idle in the heart, or against the confounding of Christianity with any class of persons who, in the words of Swift, have just enough religion to make them hate, and not enough to make them love, one another.'

Certainly Dickens seems to have had no great love for the clergy as a class. He showed, however, a typically English respect for a sincere and hardworking individual clergyman by his portrait in *Our Mutual Friend* of the incumbent of a large riverside parish, labouring heroically upon a sweated wage among a poverty-stricken and largely criminal population.

In the *History of England* which Dickens wrote for his children, his attitude to the opposing forces of Catholicism and Protestantism is very fair and balanced. His detestation of the darker features of Puritanism is almost as marked as his abhorrence of the cruelties and abuses of the Mediaeval Church. Unquestionably he inclined towards Liberalism in religious thought. In his day the doctrine of the equal and infallible inspiration of all Scritpure still held the field among the orthodox. But in *Little Dorrit* (written some years before the appearance of Colenso's *Pentateuch*) he openly places the ethics of the Old and New Testaments in contrast, and through the lips of his heroine proclaims the higher authority of the New. To a staunch exponent of ancient Israelitish morality Little Dorrit replies:

> 'Let me implore you to remember later and better days. Be guided only by the healer of the sick, the raiser of the dead, the patient Master who shed tears of compassion for our infirmities. We cannot but be right if we put all the rest away and do everything in remembrance of Him. There is no vengeance and no infliction of suffering in His life, I am sure. There can be no confusion in following Him and in seeking for no other footsteps I am certain.'

Here is bare-faced Biblical criticism, although it is based on ethics rather than on scholarship.

The only definite religious dogma which Dickens seems to have held to all his life was a belief in a future state. Many passages from his writings and letters might be given in proof of this. In 1845 he wrote to his friend Forster on the occasion of a family bereavement of the latter's:

> '. . . that end but the bright beginning of a happier union I believe; and have never more strongly and religiously believed (and oh! Forster, with what a sore heart I have thanked God for it) than when that shadow has fallen upon my own hearth and made it dark and cold.'

Upon the whole Dickens' religion, though sincere, was in a sense not profound. He lacked the mystic vision and in some respects was unable to transcend the materialistic outlook of his age. His treatment in the *History of England*, mentioned above, of Joan of Arc shows a limitation of outlook which we to-day should call lack of imagination, but which in the Victorian era would doubtless have been acclaimed as sound British common-sense.

If however Dickens' spiritual vision was limited, it was, so far as it went, true and sane. Charity, not the charity of moral laxity, which is nothing more than a cynical tolerance, but the charity springing from human sympathy and compassion which will never condemn or cast out a sinner; a limitless power of forgiveness, unto seventy times seven; pity, manifesting itself in practical service; a passionate hatred of all forms of cruelty, meanness and hardness of heart; measureless contempt for all kinds of worldliness; fortitude; generosity; cheerfulness under trial — these were for him the greatest human values, and he regarded them, not as the decorative adjuncts of the Christian Faith, but as in themselves its warp and woof. His *Christmas Carol* is woven from it.

Out of this faith sprang his passion for social justice, his life-long battle for reform of the intolerable social evils of his day. His books were his pulpit and he preached with the fervour of an Evangelical. He was no Puritan, but he pilloried vice (with one exception) and its resultant miseries with terrible realism. The exception is, of course, the vice of drunkenness, which he seemed to regard merely as an amusing and quite harmless failing. It should be remembered, however, that the *Pickwick Papers* were written before his character was fully shaped and matured. The element of vulgar horseplay in his writings tends to diminish with the passage of years.

On all other vices his judgment is swift. He is a past-master in his description of the gradual degeneration of human character under the influence of an evil passion. The kindly, respectable old grandfather of Little Nell, in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, becomes, under the influence of the gambling mania, a mean and ungrateful brute. The engaging Richard Carstone, caught in the net of another kind of speculation, sinks into invalidism

of body and mind; while into the story of a drug-fiend Dickens contrived to infuse an atmosphere of mysterious horror calculated to make *Edwin Drood* one of the most effective tracts ever written against the opium traffic.

In almost every case it is the influence of unselfish human love which reclaims the sinner to the paths of sanity and rectitude. Mr. Peggotty, Florence Dombey, Little Dorrit and Little Nell are all personifications of the cheerful, patient, supremely compassionate love which was Dickens' ideal, and which is not a bad approximation to the supernatural graces of St. Paul's chapter on charity.

It is needless to emphasize the strength of the influence of Dickens' writings upon the mentality of his age or the extent to which they contributed to the breaking down of social abuses. His novels were for a long time the most popular portion of our literary heritage, and perhaps are so still. They have become part and parcel of the every-day thought and speech of the English people. And perhaps it is not unreasonable to suppose that the strongly ethical and undogmatic religious outlook which they present has contributed to the widespread triumph of Liberal theology in our own day.

IRENE HUBBARD.

AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY REVISION OF THE PRAYER BOOK

By the Rev. F. W. MOYLE, M.A., and the Rev. H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D.

WE recently became acquainted with a little volume entitled *The Book of Common Prayer, revised according to the plan of the late Dr. Samuel Clarke, together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, and a Collection of Hymns for Public Worship*. It is dated 1774. It is not without interest, for behind it stands a chapter in the history of Prayer Book revision, but one not recounted in popular liturgical volumes dealing with the origin and revision of our incomparable liturgy. The reasons for this silence are two-fold. (1) The revision failed to achieve success. (2) It was tainted with unorthodoxy. Some Modernists, as they study it, will feel that it failed to achieve success not

because of any innate weakness, but because its launching was badly managed. It was launched on a pond and not in an estuary. Others will feel that its failure was due to its being born out of due time. It was a Latitudinarian production born when that movement was to be confronted with the forces, first of the Evangelical Movement, and later of the Anglo-Catholic Movement.

The author of the revision was the Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, M.A., whose life was written by Thomas Belsham and published in 1812. He was born in 1723 and died in 1808 in his 86th year. He was a graduate of St. John's College, Cambridge, and was elected a Fellow in 1747. He became chaplain to the Duke of Somerset. He was presented to the living of Kirkby Whiske in Yorkshire, next to Piddletown in Dorset, and then to Catterick. He married a step-daughter of Archdeacon Blackburne. In 1771 the Feathers' Tavern Association was formed of Latitudinarian clergy and laity for the purpose of petitioning Parliament to grant relief in the matter of subscription to the Prayer Book and Articles. Archdeacon Blackburne led the movement. The petition was presented. Mr. Pitt was the most notable of its supporters, and sharply rebuked Lord Shelburne for reflecting on the character of the petitioners. Mr. Pitt spoke of 'the indecency of calumniating any persons appearing in the character of petitioners for redress of grievances, more especially the persons then applying for relief in a matter that highly concerned the purity of religion, the integrity of their own minds, and even the morality of the people. He stated very well the principles of the Reformation and fairly inferred from them the propriety of the petition.'

The House of Commons refused to receive the petition by 217 to 71 votes.

Mr. Lindsey, whose Latitudinarianism, unlike Archdeacon Blackburne's, turned to Unitarianism, now resigned his preferment and left the National Church. His action was deeply regretted by 'his venerable diocesan,' the Archbishop of York, who did his best to persuade him to remain, and by his parishioners. The distinguished Dr. Priestley and his friends fitted up an auction room in Essex Street, London, as a chapel, and Mr. Lindsey was appointed its minister in March, 1774. He now

began to draw up his Reformed Liturgy, published in the same year—and this was the volume, whose title we have given.

It was, as its title-page indicates, modelled on the previous attempt of the late Dr. Samuel Clarke, but with considerable variations and on lines which diverged more definitely and widely from post-Nicene Christianity.

Dr. Clarke, a distinguished divine and theological controversialist, was born in 1675 at Norwich. He graduated with distinction at Caius College, Cambridge. He became rector of Drayton and chaplain to the Bishop of Norwich. His Boyle Lectures in 1704-5 brought him into prominence. After the death of Locke (1704), he was regarded as being the first of English metaphysicians. His theological teaching began to give offence. His clerical opponents accused him of being a Deist and also an Arian. He obviously could not be both, and seems to have been neither. His Bishop stood by him and presented him to St. Benet's in the city in 1706, and Queen Anne appointed him one of her chaplains in ordinary and rector of St. James', Westminster.

In 1712 he published his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, and in it he made a collection of passages in the Liturgy 'which may seem in some respects to differ from the foregoing doctrine.' In 1714 the Lower House of the Convocation besought the Upper House to take notice of the heresy of Dr. Clarke. Dr. Clarke offered an explanation to the Bishops which satisfied them, but not the Clergy generally. Subsequently Dr. Clarke was taken to task by his diocesan for altering the Doxology in accordance with Arianism. Dr. Waterland, who opposed his theological views, neither convinced nor silenced him. He now undertook the reformation of the Liturgy. The copy of his amended Prayer Book was presented by his son, Samuel Clarke, to the British Museum. He was a most voluminous and influential writer and died in 1729. Many of the more learned clergy were influenced by him, especially some of the bishops. Queen Caroline, the able wife of George II, and patroness of Bishop Butler, was much interested in his teaching. This was the leader whom Mr. Lindsey followed in his Prayer Book revision.

But the Latitudinarian movement for the revision of the

Liturgy goes back behind Dr. Samuel Clarke to the erudite William Whiston, well known to many as the translator of Josephus. He was the leader of an attempt to return to primitive Christianity, and particularly to primitive Christian theology. He regarded Athanasius as an innovator, and styled himself an Eusebian, as he stood neither with Athanasius nor Arius, but with Eusebius of Nicomedia. The English Liturgy appeared to him to depart in some respects from the primitive *lex orandi*. 'To remedy this defect he put forth a Liturgy which he termed *The Liturgy of the Church of England reduced nearer to the Primitive Standard*.' It was in most respects precisely identical with that in use, only it was purged from all vestiges of "the Athanasian heresy." The principal changes were in the Doxology, which was altered into what he declares its original form, in the prayer of St. Chrysostom, in the first four petitions of the Litany and one or two others, and in the collect for Trinity Sunday.'

Dr. Samuel Clarke became a member of the society formed by Dr. Whiston and was strongly influenced by him in his efforts to reform the Liturgy.

Lindsey's book went through two editions in 1774, and two more, with fresh emendations, in 1785 and 1793. The Rev. Thomas Belsham, minister of the Essex Street Chapel, thus relates the subsequent history of Dr. Lindsey's Reformed Liturgy down to 1812:

> 'The Liturgy thus amended was gladly accepted by Mr. Lindsey's congregation, and continued to be used in the chapel till the year 1802, when it was superseded by a Liturgy drawn up and introduced by his successor, the Rev. Dr. John Disney. But though this Liturgy was judicious, unexceptionable, and, as many thought, in some respects an improvement upon the former, yet, from the modern style of the language and other circumstances, and particularly from his wide deviation from the established Liturgy, it was not so acceptable to the congregation as that of the venerable founder of the society. And upon the choice of a successor to Dr. Disney, upon that gentleman's resignation in 1805, the general wish of the Trustees and the congregation was expressed to resume Mr. Lindsey's Liturgy, which was accordingly acceded to; and a few alterations, chiefly verbal, being made, to which that excellent person gave a cordial assent, a new edition was printed, a copy of which was locked up with the writings of the chapel, and a resolution passed that no further alterations should be made, nor any new form of worship be introduced, without the express consent of a majority of the Trustees.'—'*Memoir of Theophilus Lindsey*,' p. 225.)

We understand that the book is no longer in use among the Unitarians, but when it ceased to be used we have failed to discover. There was no new edition after 1805—five editions in all.

The best service in it seems to be *The Order for the Administration of Baptism*, and this we reprint in full, taken from the edition of 1805:

The Order
for the Administration of Baptism.

Note. — *That there may be for every Child two or three Sponsors; who would most properly be parents, guardians, or nearest relations.*

My Brethren,

It is written in the Gospel of St. Matthew, that our Lord Jesus Christ said to his apostles:

> 'Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit.—*Matt.* xxviii, 19.

It is also written in the Acts of the Apostles, that the disciples were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.—*Acts* xix, 5.

St. Peter also saith in his Epistle:

> 'The baptism which saveth us is not in the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.'—*I Peter,* iii, 21.

The Minister, addressing himself to the Sponsors present, shall say,

Ye have brought this child here to be baptized: I ask therefore,

Will ye faithfully and earnestly exhort this child to renounce every thing that is evil, and all sinful inclinations, so that *he* may not follow or be led by them?

Answ. I will.

Will ye instruct *him* in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Answ. I will.

Will ye exhort *him* to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of *his* life?

Answ. I will.

Then shall the Minister take the child into his hands, and say to the Sponsors,

Name this child.

Then naming it after them, and either dipping it in the water, or sprinkling water upon it, he shall say,

I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit.

Or the following form may be used,

I baptize thee into the name of Jesus Christ. See *Acts* ii, 38; xix, 5.

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-blessed God, by whose providence the different generations of mankind are raised up to know thee and to enjoy thy favour for ever; grant that this child, now dedicated to thee as the disciple of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, may be endued with heavenly virtues, and be of the number of those who shall be everlastingly saved through thy mercy. For this end we entreat thy blessing upon these thy servants, who have now solemnly engaged themselves to instruct it in thy holy truth; that they may be enabled to discharge their great trust with diligence and fidelity, and may have the comfort of beholding the fruits of their pious labours, in the virtuous improvement of those under their care. Finally, we give thee humble thanks, O heavenly Father, for all of us now assembled before thee: that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace, and to faith in thee: increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore; that we may be enabled to subdue all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceed in all virtue and godliness of living, till we come to that eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Exhortation to parents after baptism.

Brethren,

The design of receiving infants by baptism into the church of Christ, is to remind parents of their duty to them in their innocent and helpless age, that they may train them up as his disciples and the children of God; and that, as they have been the instruments of bringing them into this mortal life, they may have the comfort of contributing to their future happiness in a life that will never end.

Remember then that this child belongs to God who gave it you, and intrusts you with it, that it may be educated and fitted for himself; and if through your criminal neglect, or bad example, his reasonable creature be lost, he will require it at your hands.

Instill therefore into *his* tender mind the knowledge, reverence, and love of God, the heavenly Father and Maker of all, and a deep sense of the duty *he* owes to him. Acquaint *him* with his benevolent designs, for the recovery of a degenerate and perishing world to their duty and happiness: And lead *him* to learn the mind and will of God for *his* salvation, from that inestimable treasure of wisdom, the holy scriptures, especially the words of Christ and his apostles; not from the doctrines and inventions of men.

Check the first risings of envy and pride in *his* breast, by teaching *him* humility and a just knowledge of *himself*; that all *he* possesses or hopes for is from God, whose free bounty alone maketh the difference between his creatures. But at the same time inform *him* of the dignity of *his* nature; of the importance of reason, the light of God within *him*; by which he is to govern *himself,* to restrain *his* appetites and passions, to moderate *his* affections, to know the God that made *him*, to learn his will, to become like unto him, holy, just, and good. Teach *him* above all things to abhor falsehood and lies; and to love and cultivate truth and integrity, which will make *him* amiable in the eyes of all, and acceptable to God. Tell *him* that *he* is to love and do good to all men, because all are equally the children of God himself, and the objects of his fatherly kindness and care: that *he* is not born only for *himself,* but for others; to serve his country and mankind by promoting truth and virtue, and the public good.

To this early care of instructing your child, must be added your own invariable good example, that *he* at no time be witness to any hasty,

passionate, profane words, or unseemly behaviour, inconsistent with virtue and innocence; and that the name of God in particular be never mentioned before *him,* but with the utmost seriousness and reverence; because it is by imitation chiefly that our characters are insensibly formed from our infancy, and the impressions then made are seldom effaced afterwards.

Be therefore thus watchful over this precious charge of heaven committed to you, that it receives no injury at your hands. And sow in *him* betimes these seeds of piety, charity, sincerity, and all goodness; for otherwise the weeds of evil will spring up of course in such a world as this, which it may be difficult afterwards to root out. And although no pains that you can take can ensure success, yet, whatever happens, you will have discharged your duty, and not have the guilt and mortifying reflection of having contributed to the ruin and misery of those you love. But if your labours are successful, and generally true is the wise man's remark, *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it*; it will be a source of the highest and purest pleasure and satisfaction to you, and you will have the joy of leaving behind you those who may do good in the world when you shall be no more in it.

And may the supreme Father and Governor of all things direct and bless you in the faithful discharge of your duty, for his glory, the good of mankind, and the advancement of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Where there are other Sponsors who present the child to be baptized and not the parents, the Minister may thus begin the exhortation:

Ye that have now undertaken the care of this child, which naturally belongs to the parents, must take heed and remember that it is a child of God, for whom it is to be educated and fitted: and if through your, *etc.*

In Morning and Evening Prayer there are several striking alterations which will commend themselves to Modernists.

From the General Confession the words 'and there is no health in us' are omitted; for the Absolution is substituted the Collect for Purity from the Communion Office; and in place of the Gloria at the end of the *Venite* we have:

Minister. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, God only wise,

Answer. Be honour and glory through Jesus Christ for ever and ever. *Amen.*

And there is a note as follows:

'Dr. Clarke strikes out the common doxology and proposes one of the two following in its place, viz.:

"Glory be to God, by Jesus Christ, through the heavenly assistance of the Holy Spirit;
As it was in the beginning, . . ."

Or "Unto God be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen.*"

'The former of these doxologies of Dr. Clarke is rejected because glory cannot be said to have been to God by Christ "in the beginning," but only in "these last days in which God hath spoken to us by his Son."'

In the Apostles' Creed the words 'he descended into hell' are omitted; as also 'the holy Catholic Church and the communion of saints'; and the words 'the resurrection of the dead' are substituted for 'the resurrection of the body.' And again in an explanatory note we read:

> '"He descended into hell" was not inserted in the Creed until 400 years after Christ.
>
> "The holy catholic church" was first only "holy church"—catholic was not added to it till upwards of 300 years after Christ.
>
> "The communion of saints" came in some hundred years later. Therefore these three articles of the Creed, being of so low a date, and also obscure and of indeterminate meaning, ought to have no place in a solemn declaration of our faith before Almighty God.'

Then there are various interesting alterations in the prescribed collects. Wherever the collect uses 'through the merits of Jesus Christ' we have 'through thy merciful aid in Jesus Christ our Lord.'

The reviser never used the words 'mediator' or 'advocate,' and he substitutes such phrases as 'according to the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord,' or, as in the prayer for the Church Militant, which ends 'In these our requests we beseech thee, O God, to hear and to accept us as the true disciples of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.' In the same prayer (which is put into the office of Evening Prayer) we find, instead of references to the 'universal church,' 'inspire continually all thy sincere worshippers with the spirit . . .'; instead of 'faith and fear,' 'thy holy fear.'

The reviser dealt in a thorough and robust manner with the Occasional Offices. We have already cited in full his revision of the Baptismal Office, which eliminates all reference to original sin. In the Comfortable Words in the Communion Office the Johannine quotation reads: 'he is the propitiatory for our sins,' and a note reads as follows:

> 'Propitiatory; *i.e.* mercy seat: to signify that God by Christ, as from the mercy-seat of old, declares his pardon and favour to penitent sinners.'

The opening sentences of the Prayer of Consecration might well be adopted by those who have set their minds free from the sub-Christian theories of atonement implicit in our present office:

'Almighty God our heavenly Father, by whose gracious assistance and for our benefit thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, was obedient unto death upon the Cross; who did institute and in his holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memorial of that his precious death until his coming again: Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we may receive this bread and wine in grateful remembrance of his voluntary death and sufferings. Who in the same night,' *etc.*

The words of administration are simply:

'Take and eat this in remembrance of Christ.'
'Take and drink this in remembrance of Christ.'

The Prayer of Oblation omits reference to the 'blood' of Christ and runs:

'humbly beseeching thee to grant that by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to thy will, we may obtain the pardon of our sins and everlasting life.'

The *Gloria in Excelsis* strikes a fresh note and omits the reference to the 'Lamb of God' It runs as follows:

'Glory be to God on high and in earth peace; goodwill towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we give thanks to thee for the various manifestations of thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly king, God the Father Almighty. We bless thee for sending thy beloved Son into the world to save sinners; for exalting him unto thy right hand in heaven; for all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; and for the hope of eternal life. For thou only art wise and holy and good; thou only art the Lord; thou only dost govern all things both in heaven and earth. Therefore blessing and honour and glory and power, be unto Thee who sittest upon the throne, through our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.'

Dr. Samuel Clarke and Mr. Lindsey were of the race of the precursors. Even if their revision had achieved, which it certainly did not, something of the literary quality of the book they undertook to emend, it would have stood no chance of success. Mr. Lindsey steered the craft into a backwater. But more prejudicial to success was the fact that the ideals which prompted this revision were themselves being replaced by rival ideals, which themselves revealed limitations and prompted alterations in our incomparable Liturgy, but these were not at all in harmony with what the Latitudinarians desired. What however is of real interest is that the revisers sought to revise the Liturgy in harmony with a confessed change of doctrine. Our late Primate claimed that the revision of 1928 had achieved the feat of revising the services without altering the doctrine of the Prayer Book, but the House of Commons took another view.

DIVINITY

A SCHOOLMASTER'S DILEMMA

I HAD returned to school unsuspecting, only to find that an Upper Fifth Form, to whom I was trying to teach English, was in future to be dependent on me for its weekly period of 'Divinity'! I remembered that in my first interview with the headmaster I had been asked if I were willing to take the subject and that, greatly daring, I had said 'No.' I suppose I had not forgotten or forgiven the Kings of Israel and Judah, or St. Paul for his missionary journeys. Nor had I forgotten that term at school when my faith, such as it was, which had been largely bound up with the historical truth of the Old Testament books, had fallen from me and left me on an arid rock of atheism in the stagnant waters of school religion.

Times had changed, I told myself. The God I had been taught to believe in as a child, the Old Man with the beard and the orb in the east window of the chapel, the terrible God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the jealous, capricious Babylonish despot, was no longer worshipped in Christian churches. Though I still heard my friends who were being married admonished to 'live like Abraham and Sarah,' though I still sang hymns about eternal choirs, though I still listened to flattering, grovelling prayers, and even heard sermons on original sin and expiatory sacrifices, I told myself that modern believers, outside the lower classes, believed something very different. Yet I shrank from teaching Divinity. It seemed impossible to take the New Testament with a form of Anglo-Catholics, fundamentalists, baptists and sceptics, especially as I was without any specialist knowledge. To take the Old Testament intelligently would need an expert knowledge of oriental languages, archaeology, comparative theology and ancient history. It was incredible that the headmaster should wish me to pass on what I myself had learnt at school. There is no time for a child to learn the Israelitish ideas of Jehovah, and then unlearn them all. People, surely, had ceased to give more than lip service to the notion

that children could be taught morality from the lives of semitic patriarchs. Most people knew that the reverse is true, that on the sordid details of ancient eastern matrimonial affairs many have to rely for the knowledge that is their birthright.

What was I expected to do, I wondered. Why did public men say that it was a national disaster that children no longer read the Old Testament that had made the England (and the Ireland) of Cromwell? Was it the literary miracle of the English translation? Yes, that must be the reason. Very well then, I would take some of the books that were of literary interest to me, and thus extend my literature syllabus. That would be a good thing, since the requirements of external examinations meant that for a whole year the form studied no literature but *Macbeth* and Chaucer's *Prologue.*

When I first told the form of my plan, I saw a small cloud of trouble on the horizon, the size of a boy's hand. A sceptic tried to get me to commit myself on the subject of science and miracles. My broad-minded answer roused the baptist fervour in another boy, and I retreated. For the first time in my teaching career I knew that I had betrayed myself. I said that the question was outside the scope of 'literature of the Jews,' and that I would confine myself to the Psalms. The Baptist asked for homework, and I said I would set none the first week. When the Baptist pointed out that he was liable for punishment from his form master if none were set, I replied : 'Very well, look up the main events of David's life, and we'll try to fit his Psalms in with them.'

A week later we met again, and there was the strange stillness that comes before a storm. The Sceptic was the spokesman of the form's disapproval of David's career of butchery and lust. I said : 'Oh, that's all right! Remember the Easterns have a different code of morality. We think some of their customs immoral : they think our women most immodest. You're thinking of Bath-Sheba? Well, David did penance for that.'

I prepared to continue the lesson, but the Sceptic was still on his feet, with notes in his hand.

'I wasn't referring to Bath-Sheba, sir : that's nothing. First of all David married Michal, Saul's daughter. That's a curious story, too. And, by the way, she was already married. Later on

God killed the husband of Abigail, and David married her and another one, while Michal went off with a third husband, sir.'

I thought this would take a lot of untying, but the Sceptic went on :

'Then David had four more wives. Next he wanted Michal back, and had some more wives. I lost count of the number. But Michal ticked him off in II *Samuel* vi, for something or other, so he threw her over and afterwards murdered her sons. David's family seemed to have been birds of a feather judging by the story of Tamar.'

'What was that?' I asked weakly.

'Well, sir, you'd better read it for yourself, sir.'

'Oh, I see. Anyway I congratulate you on doing your homework so thoroughly. I'm afraid that when I set it I hadn't quite realized . . . One gets to think of David as the boy-hero, poet-king . . . founder of a royal line, and so on . . .'

I soon extricated the form from the study of this ancient poet, whose private life so stank in its nostrils, and in pursuance of my literary policy decided that the form should dramatize the story of Esther. It seemed to me an ideal story, depending on one of the most fundamental dramatic themes, hoisting the villain with his own petard. As I knew that the only experience of drama the boys had had, besides the study of Shakesperian plays for a textual examination, was musical comedy, I went so far as to explain the half-dozen characters and the essential points necessary to a three-act, or four-act version of 'Esther.' Although I was careful to point out that nothing before chapter two, verse seventeen, was relevant, one earnest boy misheard me, and in all sincerity asked naïvely whether there should be a chorus to dance before the king in a Persian garden in Act I. This brought forth an outraged protest from the Baptist about turning the Bible to blasphemous ridicule.

The Papist, who sat at the back and took no part in this lesson, gave the self-satisfied smile of one who knew better, while a Jew started another hare by suggesting that Islam was a more advanced faith than Christianity, having only one God and no images. Then to my relief the bell rang.

I took immediate steps to find out how other members of the staff conducted Divinity lessons. I found that things had not

changed in ten years. A junior classical master said that he invariably did *Kings* and *Chronicles* because the boys were easily tested on them.

'Set so much for homework,' he advised, 'and ask questions with one-word answers to make sure they've done their work. 'How long did Jehoash reign?' 'What was his mother's name?' 'Did he good or evil?' etc. The main thing is to make sure the boys don't waste time.'

Another man, who took a junior form, advised Saint Paul's journeys, at all events for small boys, because they loved drawing maps. I found that several other masters swore by the book of *Joshua*, and that annotated copies, with questions, were obtainable from the book-room. A modern language master, however, confessed to doing 'League of Nations' or 'Town Planning.'

Last of all I asked the head of the modern side, and I confess I felt that at last I should receive good counsel. The man's face lit up at the question.

'My dear boy!' he replied, 'whatever other time do you find to fill your ink-pots?'

One morning that week at prayers an action of the headmaster suggested for a moment that a modern attitude towards the subject was quite in keeping with the policy of the school. The headmaster announced the number of the hymn and added, 'Omit the last verse, which is meaningless in the light of modern knowledge.' I glanced down at the last verse, which ran:

'For O eternity's too short,
To utter all thy praise!'

On that occasion, the headmaster's mathematics reproved his poetry, but that one exception to the sentiments of *The School Hymnal* was hardly enough to indicate a liberal policy. Too often had I heard the boys cheerily singing about their broken spirits, and their gloom of sin and grief; too often had I heard the triumphant boasts that they were helpless and foul, and that life was but a fading dawn. The odds against me I felt were too heavy, so the secretary received the order for '29 Joshuas.'

JACK HOOD PHILLIPS.

A TEN YEARS' TRUCE TO CONTROVERSY

By the Editor.

IN the *Southwark Diocesan Gazette* for May, the Bishop-elect of Winchester pleads for the cessation of all religious controversy in the Church of England for the next ten years. No bishop on the Bench is more respected, and rightly respected, than Dr. Garbett. His many years of devoted and efficient service have earned for him the deep regard of all Churchmen. Any plea therefore that he urges deserves serious consideration. It is best to give the Bishop's plea in his own words :

> 'A week or so ago there appeared in the *Church Times* a striking appeal signed by the Lord Chancellor and others for "the cessation of controversy between Catholics." This call for peace among ourselves should be applied to every member of our Church, to whatever party he may belong. I find it impossible to say how strongly I feel that our controversies are doing infinite harm to our Church and are hindering its corporate witness. In the face of the attack on Christian faith and morals, which is found in its most bitter form in Russia, but which expresses itself with different degrees of intensity throughout Christendom, we ought to make every effort to close our ranks. If the nation confronted with economic peril has come together in the resolution to overcome it, the Church of God threatened by the forces of unbelief should not find it impossible to cease from internal disputing so that it might unite in an evangelistic effort to win mankind for Christ. We need a truce of God among ourselves for a period of ten years, in which we resolutely refrain from all controversy and unite in bearing our witness to the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. It is not beyond the bounds of practical politics that representative leaders of different schools of thought in the Church might by united counsel and prayer decide on this policy, which would be welcomed by all except the few irreconcilables, who cannot imagine that mankind can be saved unless all opinions contrary to their own are utterly condemned. As Whitsun comes let us pray for the reunion of Christendom, and more especially for the cessation of controversy in our Church.'

The Bishop entitles his plea 'A Truce of God,' and not inappropriately. The *pax ecclesiae* and the *treuga Dei* of the tenth and following centuries constituted a serious effort on the part of bishops particularly to secure the suppression of private feuds as detrimental to the Commonwealth as to the Church. The Truce of God was a peace movement, and we all recognize

the need for peace movements to-day, whether in the political, or economic, or ecclesiastical worlds, and we are altogether with Dr. Garbett when he pleads for peace; but the method he proposes for securing it is open to serious objection and difficulty.

Controversy is not necessarily a bad thing. It may be bad or it may be good; whether it be bad or good will depend upon its reasons and methods. Controversies arise out of differences mental, moral, spiritual, and, as Aristotle has said, 'although men differ about small things, the reasons for their differences are never small.' Gibbon stigmatized the Arian controversy as a dispute about an iota. To a sardonic sceptic so it seemed, but to men of more philosophic mind it was far otherwise. What was wrong about the Arian controversy was the horrid and un-Christian way in which it was conducted on both sides, not the controversy itself. The controversy was a necessity; when the issue had once been raised, it had to be investigated; and when it had been investigated, a decision had to be reached, and all this produced controversy. If we take, for example, what Dean Stanley called 'the long warfare of the Reformation,' it might well gratify both civil and ecclesiastical rulers if all controversy between the contending schools ceased, but is it possible when each is carrying on propaganda in the other's territory? The Christian religion demands propaganda from its adherents, and propaganda demands controversy. So does progress demand it also. Every great advance in knowledge, every great reform in the political and religious worlds, has been attended by controversy. The prophets of Israel were the most persistent of controversialists, and kings and priests desired them to be silent. Socrates, the greatest religious influence in Greece, carried controversy so far that his fellow-Athenians felt it to be necessary to put him to death. How great is the debt which the world owes to the controversialists!

No attentive reader of the Gospels can fail to observe that they are mainly concerned with our Lord's controversies with Scribes and Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, and about such matters as Sabbath observance, fasting, clean and unclean foods, judicial oaths, ablutions, and so on. Had our Lord been content to abstain from all religious controversy, He would never have been crucified, and He would have given unfeigned

satisfaction to the ecclesiastical authorities. St. Paul's Epistles are in many cases strongly controversial documents, and his opponents, the Judaizers, must have longed for the Apostle of the Gentiles to proclaim a Truce of God; but to have done so would have meant the loss of Christian freedom and the exclusion of the Gentile world from the Christian Church. The Epistles of St. John, the Apostle of Love, are highly polemical, but it was necessary that they should be so, if the historic Christian faith were not to be dissolved into an unethical theosophy.

All these controversialists were professed adherents of the same religion as their opponents — the prophets and priests of Israel, our Saviour and the Pharisees and Sadducees, St. Paul and the Judaizers, St. John and Cerinthus. Therefore it might be said: Ought they not in the face of outside hatred and opposition to have closed up their ranks? Ought they not to have ceased from internal disputings so that they might unite to win mankind for ethical monotheism? In the light of our Old and New Testament studies the question must seem absurd when cessation from controversy and the closing up of their ranks would necessitate the silence of those whose teaching and preaching, highly controversial as it was bound to be, was that very element in their religion upon the acceptance and practice of which, the progress, vitality and universality of their religion, depended. The religion of Israel would have become as the religion of Tyre and Moab if it had not been for these fomentors of controversy. The prophets died, the Saviour died, St. Paul died as the martyrs of religious controversy. Their contemporaries were not able to bear their words: the religious authorities knew that there could be no peace while they lived. They did not plead for a ten years' truce from religious controversy; they knew that such a plea would be futile: their opponents, they were well aware, claimed to be speaking in the name of God to those who misunderstood and misrepresented His will. Diplomatic Church leaders may be induced to agree upon 'a cessation of controversy,' as their supporters regard it, or upon 'a conspiracy of silence,' as their opponents stigmatize it; but they cannot suppress all disputation in a living, progressive religion, any more than the politicians can do it in a free state, or the dominant philosophy in the realms of metaphysics and ethics.

The warfare of ideas, the conflict of ideals, even the strife of tongues, must go on. When it ceases, stagnation and death ensue.

In our English Church to-day we have the controversy between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics, between those who believe in the Protestant Reformation and those who deplore it. Modernists may be inclined to cry out, 'a plague on both your houses,' feeling that there are more important and less well-worn issues to discuss, but the dispute must go on: the Oxford Movement Centenary Celebration on the one side very naturally provokes, and indeed necessitates, a Reformation Commemoration on the other, and it is not a bad thing that it should be so. It really makes for a better understanding of both those historical events, and with that better understanding comes home the realization how much they were of their own day. They delivered their message; they served their purpose; but God has some better thing in store for us. Nevertheless, that controversy must go on until all parties to it realize what that better thing is, and so desert the old battlefield in order to contend for that new and better thing elsewhere.

It is equally unpractical to-day to bid Modernists and Traditionalists to cease their controversy. Bishops may bid them close their ranks to carry out a great united campaign against the forces of unbelief and materialism, and those who desire to be bishops may secure the approbation of the authorities by telling the disputants to get together and get on with the work; but the disputants know how deep are the differences, and that they determine not only the methods of the campaign to be fought, but also its objectives. There can be no effective co-operation until the abyss has been bridged or abolished, and disputation is needful to secure mutual understanding. We have, as Modernist and Traditionalist realize, two conflicting views of the Atonement, two conflicting views of the Second Advent, two conflicting views of Miracle, two conflicting views of the Sacraments, two conflicting views of the Church. The Modernist holds that unless his convictions prevail the Christian Religion cannot win humanity to Christ's Religion. On the other hand, the Traditionalist is convinced that, when he surrenders his traditionalist *forms of faith*, all is lost. It is clear that controversy between them must go on and must precede really effective co-operation

in the field of doctrine, although not in those of ethics and prayer.

Peace is a great boon, but it is not, as the pacifists think, the greatest good, and so it can be bought at too high a price, if truth and freedom and efficiency are bartered away for it. He whom we call the Prince of Peace said: 'I came not to bring peace but a sword.' Christianity is in agreement with History when it views life as conflict, and one aspect of that conflict is controversy.

Where the Christian Religion plays its part in this matter is in teaching us how to conduct such controversies. It commands the elimination of the *odium theologicum*: it insists upon patience and courtesy, truthfulness and justice, as essential qualities in such a warfare. Edmund Burke exhorted his contemporaries 'so to be politicians as not to forget they were gentlemen.' Our theological controversialists when engaged in their conflicts need to remember that they are Christians.

Another way in which the Christian Religion tempers controversy is by providing a scale of values for its adherents, and so inculcating a sense of proportion. There are difficulties here, because Christ's scale of values is very different from the ecclesiastical scale of values; yet the Christian Religion can provide for the Christian controversialist a scale of values which will lead him to feel that in disputing about some matters he is descending below the Christian level. *Non curat lex de minimis*, and the same is true of the Christian Religion.

The Christian Religion then can and does purge and ennoble the methods of controversy and limit its range, but it does not forbid it. On the contrary, it commands us against our natural inclinations to sloth, cowardice, and indifference, to contend, but warns us to take heed not only with regard to what we contend for, but also how we contend.

Wordsworth's Happy Warrior may well be the model of the Christian controversialist:

> 'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
> Upon that law as on the best of friends;
> He labours good on good to fix, and owes
> To virtue every triumph that he knows.

COUNSELS OF PERFECTION

By the Ven. W. L. Paige Cox, M.A., B.D., Archdeacon of Chester.

THE phrase 'Counsels of Perfection' is, of course, not a Biblical one, and the doctrine is a later deduction from the language of Scripture.

From some passages of the New Testament it has been inferred that a distinction is to be drawn between precepts which everyone must obey and counsels specially conducive to perfection which men may or may not follow at their discretion. The passage most frequently referred to in this connection is that in St. Matthew xix, 21 ('If thou wishest to be perfect'), which tells of the interview of the rich young man with Jesus. As this man was able to say that he had kept all the commandments, it was supposed that the advice that he should sell all his possessions was advice which indicated how he might do 'more than was commanded to him.' In course of time it came to be taught that merit so acquired was available for others. It went to swell a general treasury of merits which was entrusted to the Church, and which the Roman pontiff, the Vicar of Christ, could for reasonable causes, by the power of the Keys, unlock, and grant to the faithful, in the way of indulgences, and for the remission of temporal punishment. Hence arose the sale of indulgences, these merits being dispensed for a money payment. This developed doctrine is condemned in the Fourteenth Article of the Church of England, 'Of Works of Supererogation.'

To revert to the case of the rich young man, it is to be noticed that he was told, not simply that he should sell all that he had and give to the poor, but that he should follow Jesus. This was the full counsel given to him. But it was more than a counsel to the young man, it was a precept—a commandment to him. His salvation depended on his obeying it. If he had kept the ten commandments in the letter, he had obviously not kept them in the spirit, for the sin of covetousness in the form of his love of his great possessions had got such a hold on him that it threatened his prospect of obtaining eternal life. His great need, what he

'lacked,' was to forsake the love of riches, which he could do only by renouncing his possessions, and to follow Jesus, and so learn from Him how to advance surely towards perfection.

It might appear to be a natural inference from this that it would be good for any and all at this present day who are in danger of being ensnared by the love of riches that they should renounce all their possessions and distribute them among the poor. But the particular form which such a counsel or precept would take as from the lips of Christ would vary with the social conditions of different ages. In this age experience has taught us that giving money or food or clothing to the poor often does more harm than good; and a man would be acting strictly in the spirit of Christ's injunction to the young ruler who would thoughtfully and discriminatingly lay out his means in schemes of philanthropy without necessarily giving them up once and for all.[1] What is still as true as ever is that the way to eternal life is self-consecration, and that readiness for complete surrender is the one condition of true discipleship.

There was perhaps another reason why our Lord gave this counsel or call to the young man. We are told that 'Jesus, beholding him, loved him.' He was such an one, on account of his amiable qualities, as would have been useful to Him as an Apostle, and He would put before him the same requirement that He had put before those whom He had already chosen, *viz.* that they should forsake all and follow Him, so fitting themselves for the life of itinerant service which He had made His own.

Another passage on which the doctrine of 'counsels of perfection' was based is I *Cor.* vii, in which St. Paul recommends abstinence from marriage 'by reason of the present distress,' though he does not press the recommendation.[2]

[1] There are some suggestive observations on this present-day mode of obedience to Christ's teaching about riches in Chapter XVII of *Ecce Homo*.

[2] If the Pastoral Epistles are Pauline, then we have a later expression of S. Paul's mind with regard to marriage in *I Tim.* v, 14. There he says emphatically: 'I desire'—this is stronger than the 'I will' of the Authorised Version—'it is my earnest wish that the younger widows should marry.' And, as the Authorised Version in its rendering rightly suggests, the wish is applicable to 'younger women' in general. The Apostle in the same passage gives reasons, derived from experience in the Church, why he holds this view.

The doctrine of counsels of perfection had its rise in connection with the ascetic practices of the early Church. As it was found extremely difficult to live the Christian life consistently amid the distractions and temptations of the pagan world, some earnest men, of whom St. Anthony was the foremost, went out into the deserts to serve God in solitude. Their minds were filled with thoughts about the early disciples of Jesus who had left all to follow Him, and their primary intention was to do as the disciples did. The particular course they adopted, however, would appear to have been, in part at least, suggested by the sort of life that was lived by the ascetics and monks of other religions. They would seem, too, to have been influenced, though perhaps unconsciously, by the notion prevalent in the East that matter was essentially evil and that the fleshly desires had a radically sinful taint. Hence, in their description of the faults against which they had to battle, 'fornication' stood for all sexual relations, and the ideal life on earth was a sexless life such as that of the angels.

The monastic system was based on the counsels of perfection as thus conceived and interpreted. In time it came to be associated with much useful service to humanity and with the advancement of learning, and the Church and society generally gained much from the labours of those who were thus associated together in seclusion from the world. But there were two inherent weaknesses in the monastic system from the first. There is every warrant in the New Testament for the life of sacrifice and devotion to the good of others, but none for working out one's own salvation in a state of permanent severance from the ordinary life of men. And, further, it was a contravention of the natural order of human society, as designed by God, for multitudes of men and women to be organized together in separate communities to lead a celibate life. There were inherent dangers in such an arrangement, and it was injurious to society at large. These weaknesses in the system manifested themselves

It is to be noted also that in the previous chapter (*I Tim.* iv, 1-3) he speaks of 'seducing spirits and doctrines of devils' . . . 'forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth.'

Whatever may have been the method of composition of the Pastoral Epistles, they express the mind of St. Paul in this matter.

more and more as time went on, and it is clear from the records and literature of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that by then the monastic system had largely outlived its day, and that this was coming to be generally recognized. The Dissolution of the Monasteries in England is not infrequently attributed to the tyranny and avarice of Henry VIII; but, strong and self-willed character though he was, it would have been impossible for Henry to have effected so great a social change had he not had the bulk of the people behind him. It is significant that the dissolution of the monasteries was taken in hand before any move was made for the reformation of doctrine in the Church of England, and it is still more significant that in every Roman Catholic country in Europe the monasteries were in course of time dissolved by the State for reasons that seemed good to the rulers from the point of view of the public benefit.

While taking note thus of the weaknesses inherent in the monastic system which were certain to become manifest in course of time, it is of importance to remark that it rendered durable service to the Church in two respects. It kept continually alive the idea of perfection as the dominating pursuit of the Christian life,[3] and it showed what useful Christian service might be rendered by men and women specially banded together for such service. There is a proper place in the Church of God for brotherhoods and sisterhoods composed of trained workers; and there are useful hints for the organization of such societies to be gained from the monastic system, though with an avoidance of the extravagances of doctrine and practice which characterized that system in the Mediaeval period. A distinctive dress, for instance, for members of such organizations has its advantages; for women especially it is protective, and may set a good example of simplicity of attire. It acts, however, as an advertisement of piety and self-denial, though that is far from being intended. On the whole it would seem to be advisable that such uniforms should be as little conspicuous and as conventional as possible.

Reverting to the general subject of 'counsels of perfection' as involving the renunciation of things lawful, the mistake has to be guarded against of supposing that that state of life is

[3] 'One thing I do: I press on toward the goal' (*Phil.* xiii, 14).

necessarily higher in moral value than those in which the generality of persons have to live. It is so far conducive to perfection that it is a more or less protected state in which there is less temptation to sins of a special sort than in the open life in the world; though in no such state is there deliverance from sins of thought, which Our Lord placed on a par with sins of act. Such a state, if it has its relative advantages, has its disadvantages as well, for in shielding the soul from certain temptations, it also deprives it of opportunities of advance through battling with those temptations, the temptation to the selfish use of money, for example. It is partly by battling with such temptations that men may increase in habits of justice and charity in their business dealings with their fellow-men.

From the point of view, too, of the relative amount of sacrifice for which there is scope in either state we may not on the whole grade the one state above the other. The self-discipline required of the man who would be scrupulously honest in business, considerate to his employees, and charitable in the disposition of his goods, is at least equal on the whole to that of the man who renounces his possessions once for all; and the self-restraint that has to be exercised in married life and the altruistic cares involved in the maintenance of a family may be well set over against the self-dedication to celibacy. As between celibacy and married life there is no moral superiority of the one state over the other. As Jeremy Taylor puts it:

> 'One is not a better chastity than the other. Marriage is a κοίτη ἀμίαντος, an undefiled state, and nothing can be cleaner than that which is not at all unclean.'

The knowledge that a person is devoted to celibacy for some good motive will always tend to command respect; but it is to be remembered that hundreds of women in these days, owing to the inequality in numbers between the sexes, are perforce celibate. They take it as a matter of course, and live clean and useful lives, and perhaps they are the better for not having their attention riveted on the celibate state by a formal renunciation of marriage.

On the whole then it may be concluded that there is not good ground for pressing the doctrine of the 'counsels' as indicating 'short cuts to perfection.' It is for those to follow them who

feel an inclination and an impulse to do so; but for the immense majority, with their urgent claims of duty in the circumstances in which they find themselves, there is no choice in the matter. What is certain is that all are intended for perfection, and that all may make progress towards perfection however they may be situated; and the counsel of universal application is, 'Let each man, wherein he was called, therein abide with God.'[4]

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION*

'Refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.'—I *Timothy* iv, 7.

THE present religious situation throughout the Christian world is extraordinarily interesting, and I propose to make it the subject of my sermon to-day. In this land most religious leaders in the Church of England, in the Free Churches, and among Roman Catholics, appear to be gravely anxious. 'Our faith is fighting for its life,' is the opinion of one Anglican bishop. An Anglican theologian speaks somewhat bitterly of 'the tyranny of science.' Free Church leaders feel that the younger generation is 'repudiating the Gospel,' and lament diminishing congregations. Roman Catholic hierarchs, blandly ignoring the fact that Catholic sacramentalism is the descendant of the pagan mystery-religions, speak of the paganism of the modern world, and pass on to denounce divorce, birth-control and the sterilization of the feeble-minded.

Let us consider the situation. Can one, who accepts the religious teaching of Jesus the Christ and reveres alike His example and His authority, rightly say that the modern world is rushing headlong to social and spiritual destruction? I doubt it. I see rather a world eager to assimilate new knowledge, anxious to repudiate past mistakes, making bold and sometimes wild experiments that the Kingdom of God may be established upon

[4] *I Cor.* vii, 24.

* Sermon preached by the Right Rev. E. W. Barnes, Sc.D., Trinity College, Lord Bishop of Birmingham, in Great St. Mary's Church on Sunday, May 1st, 1932.

earth. I see Churches with intellectual interests limited by prejudices, sometimes opposing, sometimes giving but feeble support to causes worthy of active Christian zeal.

To-day is May-day, the day on which the workers of Europe use the coming of Spring to symbolize their undying aspirations. For the most part such workers in this country stand aloof from, while abroad they are hostile to, organized Christianity. Are they to be deemed hostile to Christ or to a faith and works to which the Churches have dared to attach His name?

Think of Russia as we knew it twenty years ago, its Church ruled by Pobiedonotzeff as Procurator of the Holy Synod, its bishops appointed by the foul Rasputin, its dominant cult the worship of ikons. Is it impossible that men, because of an intense desire for righteousness and truth, swept such a Church away when the opportunity came? With the evil, good things perished. Let us not be anxious. The things that are of God are imperishable: the good will return.

A year ago in Spain a political tyranny, buttressed by a branch of the Christian Church, collapsed. Was it unnatural that at once passion flamed out strongly against the Jesuits and other religious orders? Political and religious freedom are things precious in the sight of Christ. Christians ought not to seek to withhold them from their fellowmen.

In England, moreover, the difficulties of the Churches are largely of their own making. Eighteen years ago these same Churches, with a unity of heart never shown since, accepted war. The Quakers, apart from individuals, alone maintained the Christian ideal. All since have had their due reward. As I read history, a Church which is disloyal to righteousness or false to truth can succeed for a time. In the end it is punished because God, who rules all, is a God of righteousness and truth. No one, within or without the Churches, to-day defends war. But are organized Christian bodies protagonists on behalf of a degree of disarmament which might be dangerous to the nation adopting it? They usually ignore the fact that prudential motives did not weaken the idealism of Christ.

Must we not admit further that Christian Churches have been, and still are, afraid of new truth? We live in an era of scientific progress unparalleled in the history of mankind.

Science during the last century has radically changed the background of man's thought. Our present knowledge as to the age and extent of the Universe, as to the uniformity of nature, and as to man's origin and antiquity—such knowledge has rendered obsolete much traditional theology. Yet the Churches have struggled against the admission of doctrinal error and still, when possible, repudiate or minimize the need of change.

We are the highest of the mammals. We have emerged quite recently, as geological time is measured, from some group of anthropoid apes. The gorilla and the chimpanzee are literally our cousins. Our sins result from the persistence of animal instincts which war against the recent moral and spiritual growth that is still sadly imperfect in humanity. Contrast such new truth with old error. That Adam, tempted by Eve, ate an apple which caused him to 'fall' and that through this fall sin and death came into the world—such teaching is now incredible. You may say that nowadays we all accept these facts. It is not so. Fundamentalism is strong in our own Church: it is, I believe, stronger in the Free Churches to-day than it was a quarter of a century ago. As to the Roman Church and Evolution—well, one or two books have been recently published on evolution by Roman theologians: they are ingenious but not edifying.

In Cambridge we remember with pride that Charles Darwin was the first securely to establish the fact that species are not immutable. His fame grows as the years pass. Whatever be the origin of mutations, it seems certain from recent statistical researches that 'natural selection' is an adequate explanation of the machinery of evolution. Darwin died on April 19, half a century ago. On this May-day the Soviet government is broadcasting to the Russian people alike the greatness of the man and the profound importance of his discoveries. The propaganda is anti-religious: it will have a measure of success because, in emphasizing man's animal origin, the Soviet authorities are proclaiming a truth which the Roman and Orthodox Churches deny or evade.

If we actually believe that goodness and truth are of God we need not fear that the teaching which results from scientific research will harm religion. We shall understand that the so-called tyranny of science is friendly guidance, which theologians

ought gladly to accept. The best way to destroy superstition is to examine religious beliefs by the dry light of reason. Faith is both purified and strengthened when it is united to intellectual progress.

Are the fundamentals of Christian belief less certain now than half a century ago? Let us pause for a few moments to reflect on the doctrines of God, free-will, and human immortality, the classic trio of Christ's teaching. I make bold to say that increasingly those, who unreservedly accept the standpoint created by modern science and reflect upon it in the light of man's development and aspirations, find in Christian theism a reasonable explanation of the control of the Universe. If all the evidence yielded by man's knowledge, emotions and intuitions is co-ordinated, I believe that Christ's teaching as to God is seen to be more and not less reasonable than it was half a century ago. The inadequacies of any purely mechanical scheme of the Universe have become increasingly apparent during the last fifty years. Moreover, the need of assigning a due place in any theoretical scheme to man's spiritual aspirations has forced us to recognize that the creative process to which we owe our origin still continues. Deism, with its idea of God as an absentee landlord, must be abandoned. The difficulties raised by the problem of evil are formidable; but they do not force us to doubt Christ's revelation of God as alike Creator and indwelling Spirit.

Personally I have never been able to take very seriously the denial of human free-will. I am sure—it belongs to my constant and invariable experience—that I have, within acknowledged limitations, freedom of action. I never believed in the world-formula imagined by Laplace, which should predict my every act. Sooner or later science will discover how spontaneity enters into the sequences which it examines. It may even be that the Heisenberg uncertainty-relations already afford a clue. But until we can find and investigate types of animal volition which are associated with not more than a few quanta of action, speculation must be indecisive. Of necessity widely divergent views are at present held by men qualified by expert ability to express an opinion. Free-will, however, can take care of itself. We, who are normal, *are* responsible for our actions. Christian teach-

ing as to sin a punishment may be unpleasant; but it is not untrue. Yet we are realizing that abnormal human beings exist and multiply who cannot be held responsible for their actions. How best to deal with them is one of the most important of modern problems. They are not fit material for the Kingdom of God : of mud you cannot build a palace.

The Christian doctrines of God and of human free-will are not, as I have indicated, rendered insecure by the recent progress of knowledge. I would add that I see no reason to doubt the fact of human immortality. Unless man's personality survives bodily death, no coherent explanation of his aspirations and gifts can be made. It is true that we cannot form any conception of the circumstances of life beyond the grave. But can we hope to do so until we discover some reason why consciousness should be connected with those transformations of carbon compounds which form the living bodies of animals? So long as the origin and nature of consciousness remain a profound enigma, science can offer neither proof nor disproof of the possibility of the continuance of personality after death.

All such considerations persuade me that the more fully the Churches accept and welcome new truth, the sounder will be their influence. There is nothing in the present growth of man's ordered knowledge of the world to make us fear for the future of our faith. If there were reason for such fear, that faith would be proved to be mere credulity, then it would rightly perish. But modern science and the Christian faith, rightly understood, are not enemies but friends. Yet I am bound to say that in current presentations of Christianity there is much that conflicts with modern knowledge, much that alienates intelligent men and women from organized religion.

There is, first of all, that assertion of the inerrancy of Scripture which is known as fundamentalism. I will forbear to criticize a belief which is largely pathetic. Of the spiritual value of our Scriptures it is difficult to speak too highly. But the Bible is not commended by extravagant and injudicious claims made on its behalf.

Even those who repudiate fundamentalism often demand acceptance of practically the whole of the miraculous element in the New Testament. The modern man of science who accepts

the divine ordering of the Universe does not, of course, assert that God could not set aside the normal working of His laws; it is, however, a fact that we never find instances of those large scale breaches in the uniformity of nature which are commonly termed miracles. Obviously therefore religious belief should not be based upon such alleged occurrences. But though Modernists have pressed this consideration since the opening of the present century, they still meet with angry criticism when they reiterate the obvious.

The Church of England has its fundamentalist wing and its clergy who seek to evade the results of critical enquiry into the New Testament; but it alienates thoughtful men and women far more because of the continually growing extravagance of the Catholicism which had its origin in the Oxford Movement. That Movement, as we all know, began a century ago as a reaction not only against the liberalism of the time, but also against the rapid development of geology which even then was tending to discredit certain aspects of traditional theology. Into the Oxford Movement Gore introduced both Christian Socialism and also the results of Biblical criticism as applied to the Old Testament. But he did little to modify the reactionary theology of Pusey. As a direct result of the development of that theology, we have the ritual disorder and many of the impossible beliefs that exist in the Church of England at the present time. Dr. Arnold, as we are well aware, foresaw the estrangement between Church and nation which would result from the Catholic revival. I am in the tradition of which he was an ornament. Erasmus at the Reformation, the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century, the much-abused Latitudinarians of the age of the enlightenment and the Victorian Broad Churchmen were the spiritual forefathers of the Modernists of to-day. One and all we repudiate an apostolical succession which is supposed to convey to a particular priesthood spiritual powers which others do not possess. We deny that any Church is infallible or that any Councils or creeds are inerrant. To us all the sacramental beliefs of Catholicism rejected at the Reformation are untrue. Modernists of to-day rejoice to meet other Christians in a Communion where they remember that the breaking of bread is a symbol of unity derived from their common Master. But when

men allege that the bread of Communion is sanctified by the actual presence of Christ and therefore worthy to be a focus of devotion, they cease to put before us a rational faith. 'Refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.'

As I have indicated, Gore and his friends maintained the social ideals of Maurice and Kingsley. But we are passing into a new era; and new social ideals demand support. For instance, the medical officer of health and the sanitary engineer have enormously reduced the infant death-rate. It is curious how blind people are to the consequences of this reduction. 'Advanced' women still write as though the limited activities of their sex a couple of centuries ago were due to the wickedness of man. The limitation was caused by the need of continuous child-bearing and by the fact that the work of practically all the women of the nation was required to keep the infant death-rate within bounds. The change since, say, Queen Anne's time is marvellous. As a result of the transformation there is now no need for a married woman to give birth to a dozen children in the hope that two or three may survive. A wholly new danger is upon us. There must, in fact, be a limitation of the birth-rate or over-population will become disastrous. Already it is clear that those countries like Italy, Southern Ireland and Japan which refuse to have population checks are a menace to the peace of the world. What, now, is the duty of a Christian Church under such circumstances? Surely it should use all its influence both to prevent a dangerous growth of population, likely to lead to war, and also to encourage the increase of the best stocks in every community. The mentally deficient are increasing among us at an alarming rate. Surely such as are not permanently segregated should be sterilized. But alike against birth-control and against sterilization the Roman Church sets its anti-social influence: and I regret that other Churches are not taking that active part in eugenic reform that we expect from men who seek to build on earth the city of God.

If I have carried you with me to-day I shall have persuaded you that the various branches of the Christian Church, in so far as they are failing, fail not because of the perverse wickedness of humanity, but because they have no adequate apprehension

of the righteousness and truth that flow from Christ. I do not deny that now, as at all times, there are some who use liberty as a cloak for licence. With the repudiation of the evils and falsehoods tolerated by organized religion there is, moreover, in certain quarters, an extravagance which repudiates also things good and true. But I maintain that, if those who are drawn to Christ and His teaching seek truth fearlessly, and remain eager for righteousness among men, they need not fear the overthrow of their religion.

I have pleaded for a faith that is reasonable. Yet I do not forget that we need more than a placid philosophical theism; we need spiritual enthusiasm. Such spiritual enthusiasm should resemble in its naturalness a spring morning. I personally have no belief in a dualism of natural and supernatural. The word 'supernatural' does not occur in the New Testament, and it seems to suggest that in the realm of the natural God's writ fails to run. As I see the matter, the spiritual arises from the biological as mere awareness leads to mental activity. In fact, we are so made that, though we may not pretend to any exceptional endowment of mystical perception, it is possible for all of us to develop spiritual insight. Organized religion is primarily of value in that it promotes such development and makes it the source of active religious enthusiasm. Active religious enthusiasm, based on sound knowledge and clear insight, is the pressing need of Christians to-day. I have little doubt that, as a reaction against the disappointments and failures of religion in the present era, there will come in due course an outburst of true Christian activity. The present winter will be followed by spring. Men and women will, in the old words, see God; and they will see Him, not by closing their minds, but by opening their hearts. Religion will then give the exhilaration which now we find in scientific progress. When that time arrives the world will realize anew the strength and power of the Christian faith.

BOOK REVIEWS

A NOTABLE VICTORIAN*

It is seldom that the same man attains high distinction on two such different fields as Greek scholarship and high finance. Walter Leaf was equally eminent in both; and the interesting book which his wife has just published is a fitting tribute to his memory. As the Chairman of the Westminster Bank he occupied a conspicuous and honourable place among the financiers of his day; and as a scholar he had a European reputation as one of our greatest authorities on Homer and Homeric problems. In the autobiographical chapters of this book he gives us a most interesting account of his early years and of the influences which acted upon him in his youth. His father, of whom he speaks with much affection, was a prosperous city merchant, who took a deep interest in the welfare of his children, and young Leaf used to say his prayers at his father's knee. His father was very fond of Dickens, which he read aloud from time to time to his children, carefully bowdlerizing expressions which he deemed unfit for young ears to hear. But it was his mother who started his education. 'This,' says Dr. Leaf, 'was founded in the first place on the Bible, which my brother and I certainly knew pretty well from end to end. It would have been difficult, I think, to pose us on the mysteries of the heave-offering: we could recite the kings of Judah without confounding the persons of Jehoiachin and Jehoiakim, and we could recite by heart the first fifty of the Psalms. To this we had finally to add the appalling Psalm cxix. This was the outcome of an unhappy Sunday call on my uncle William at Clapham Park, when one of my cousins was put up to recite, and did in fact recite correctly, that strange composition, which in English loses whatever interest it can ever have had from the fact that in Hebrew it is an acrostic. Of course my mother would not allow her sons to be outdone by their cousins, and we too learnt it till we were letter perfect. The only useful result as far as I am concerned is that I did learn the order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and was thus saved a little trouble when the fancy took me to obtain a smattering of the Hebrew language.' In this Evangelical circle the Tractarian party which was then beginning to make a stir in the Church was looked upon with considerable distrust and suspicion. His mother, he tells us, was a woman of a deeply religious nature, and her daily prayer was that her two sons should grow up to take Holy Orders and to give their lives to Evangelical propaganda. But this was not to be; and it was with a sense of grievous disillusionment that she had to acknowledge her failure. Although he disappointed his mother's hopes as to his future calling, Dr. Leaf recognizes with gratitude that it was always her aim to make religion persuasive, and that his childhood was not terrorized by visions of hell such as too often in those days were used in the hope of inspiring virtue in youth.

At Harrow, to which he was sent by his father, young Leaf came into contact with a wider circle of friends, among them Matthew Arnold and Dean Farrar, who was then a master there. His friendship with Arnold was life-long, but he has little to say either of his poetry or of his theological writings, both of which have exercised a deep impression on the educated public mind. He was for a time in Farrar's House at Harrow, and when

**Walter Leaf, 1851—1927. Autobiography with a Memoir.* By Charlott M. Leaf. (Publisher, John Murray: 1932. Price 10/6.)

Farrar received a commission from Messrs. Cassell to write a life of Christ, he took Leaf and another boy with him to Palestine. Farrar's *Life of Christ,* when it appeared soon after this, had a very wide circulation, and was much read outside theological circles. It was not a great book, but it was a sort of counterblast to Renan's celebrated *Vie de Jesus,* which appeared about 1864, and for a time took Europe almost by storm. Renan's book was based on the researches of German scholarship, more particularly on the famous work of Strauss. But he added what he called a 'fifth Gospel to it—that is to say, the sacred land in which the Master lived. It was the first book which called the attention of the Roman Catholic world to the results of modern scholarship; and the style in which it was clothed was so fascinating that it delighted where it did not and could not convince. In visiting Palestine before producing his life of Christ, Farrar was following in the footsteps of Renan. But he had not the literary genius of the great Frenchman, whose book will live apart altogether from its manifest historical defects.

Another interesting experience of young Leaf's was his visit to Oberammergau. An article of Dean Stanley's first called the attention of the English public to the Passion Play in Bavaria, and in 1870 his parents, who were already there, telegraphed to him to come out and see it without delay. He saw it in its primitive simplicity, and he says that the effect upon him was most solemn, and he adds that he must have been one of the last to witness it before it was taken up 'by Cooks as a holiday stunt.'

The time had now come when it was decided that he should go to the University, and he went up to Cambridge in 1870 with the feeling that manhood had at last been reached. These years at Cambridge Dr. Leaf describes as the happiest years in his life. He felt his faculties — moral, intellectual, physical — steadily developing. But the mild evangelical creed in which he had been nurtured fell completely away. 'I had no sort of struggle,' he says, 'nor remorse. I simply recognized that what I had been taught to say I believed had no meaning whatever for me. This did not mean that I became irreligious. No sort of materialism ever made any appeal to me. I was at best a theoretical agnostic, but with a strong natural bent to Theism of a rather intimate sort.' 'We were still,' he adds, 'at Cambridge under the dominant influence of Mill. The posthumous tract on Theism, which was a real shock to friends, such as John Morley, appealed strongly to me, and no doubt confirmed the natural tendency of my religious consciousness. I had an instinct,' he says, 'which I could not justify, but which told me that true reality was to be found not in Matter but in Mind: that the Universal Mind, which we call God, was immanent in all of us: that the voice of Conscience which we call Duty was the voice of God: that in fact in any question we always could satisfy ourselves in practice what was the right course and what was the wrong. In fact, I had arrived pretty much at Kant's Categorical Imperative, but had not gone further.'

Dr. Leaf took a keen interest in Psychical Research, and he looked upon what is called 'the subliminal self' as a channel of communication between the conscious self and the Universal Mind. Although Pragmatism when he left Cambridge had hardly seen the light as a modern philosophic system, he became a sort of Theistic Pragmatist, and this remained to the last his fundamental attitude of mind. Christian dogma in the traditional form, in which he had been taught to accept it, he could no longer believe, and this led him to refrain from participating in the Communion Service. But he was willing to attend the services of the Church, as he held it to be for our spiritual good that 'we should strive to keep ourselves in touch

with the Universal Mind by an attitude of adoration.' This attitude he believed was made all the easier by a community of worship, a religious abstraction in which all spirits strove to approach God by roads however various yet animated by a common aspiration. For him prayer became, not the asking of any favours temporal or spiritual, but a conscious stimulation of the yearning toward God, which was too easily stifled in the daily round of life.

He felt the logical force of Agnosticism, when confronted with the supreme mystery of ultimate Reality. But he did not seem to be aware that this has also been felt by the greatest minds in the Christian Church. In the ancient Church, Cyril of Jerusalem tells us 'That in things relating to God the confession of ignorance is great knowledge'; and our own Hooker says in his *Ecclesiastical Polity* that 'Our soundest knowledge is to know that we know Him, not as indeed He is, neither can know Him. Our safest eloquence concerning Him is our silence, when we confess without confession . . . that His greatness is above our capacity to reach.' The Pantheism which had so much attraction for him was not so much Pantheism as what Krause calls Panentheism, that is to say, not God in all things, but all things in God.

Dr. Leaf's life is especially interesting as it gives us a deep insight into the Victorian mind at its best, and more particularly in its attitude towards the religious problems which, at that period, were attracting so much attention. To men of his stamp the dogmatisms of Evangelicalism, and of what is now called Anglo-Catholicism, had become impossible. They wanted to preserve the ethical values of Christianity without its traditional dogmatic assumptions. They were groping after some form of Christian Humanism which would satisfy all that was best in the Christian conception of life with all that is best in the modern view of the world.

Mrs. Leaf is to be congratulated on producing a volume which gives us such a clear insight into so deeply interesting a personality.

W.D.M.

THE HUMANITY OF BISHOP GORE*

Charles Gore, Father and Son, is a delightful account of Bishop Gore in relation to his human and natural environment. By this we mean his relation to the environment which was created for him, rather than that which he created for himself. Some men are unfortunate in the choice of their parents. That was not the case with Bishop Gore. The Honourable Charles Gore and the Countess of Kerry were all that could be desired as parents. Some men are compelled to live amid sordid surroundings. That was not Bishop Gore's lot, born and bred in a Whig home. Even when at a later period his surroundings were ascetic, at least they were refined—and he was very sensitive to refinement, whether in personalities or in inanimate things. He loved what was beautiful, perhaps as much as he loved what was good.

With charming modesty the author, the Bishop's nephew, claims nothing for his memoir save the vividness of truth. He writes:

> 'It sometimes chances that a few strokes made on the spot will convey a more vital and not less true, though less complete, impression of one aspect of the subject than an elaborate study, prepared after lengthy research and careful selection.'

'Look in thy heart and write' has plainly been the method of the biographer, and he has produced a work of art. 'The highest art is to conceal art,' but there is no skilful concealment in this little volume. The desire

**Charles Gore—Father and Son.* By the Honourable John Gore. (Published by John Murray: 1932. Price 3/6.)

to give abiding form to impressions, which are bound only too quickly to fade, impressions of one whom he loved and admired, has produced a biography which deserves to be widely read.

The descriptions of various scenes is particularly well done. Here is one of Gore preaching in the Abbey:

> 'The doors [of the Abbey] opened; every available space from which the preacher's voice could be heard was quickly and silently filled. It was a strangely moving sight. The soft light of a hundred candles dimly lit the choir and its carved oak stalls, and threw a still fainter light on time-worn arches and the chancel's vaulted roof, and on the pale and delicate tracery of lancet windows. A single candle burned on either side of the altar, but through the south-west windows the last rays of the sun streamed in, flooding in pools of purple and crimson, floor and column and carved wood.
>
> 'Beyond this dim yet gorgeous setting in the choir, deep shadows lay on silent and empty spaces beneath the mighty vault. There in the jewelled light was life and hope, beyond was emptiness and death. And again and again in the waiting congregation men looked up, fascinated by the perspective and the indescribable beauty and contrasts of the scene. Then at last the great bell struck the hour and the procession came in sight. The choir-boys in their pageantry of white and red, the clergy following, and last, the preacher whose conviction and magnetism had brought the great congregation together. And when evensong was finished and he went up into the pulpit, there was in his eyes a hint of perplexity, of wistfulness, almost of doubt, as he looked down on that sea of upturned faces: till, with a characteristic twist of his shoulders, he shook off a momentary mood of contemplation, and his clear enunciation and penetrating voice broke the silence. He said nothing that the youngest could not understand, nor the wisest fail to appreciate as essential truth . . . Before that plain tale, told so plainly (and yet with such consummate art), difficulties of faith seemed to vanish and even workaday anxieties to fade . . . Certain it is that none went empty away, with the echo of that magic voice in his ears: "The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds."'

That description needs no laboured commendation. It is done by one who has an artist's eye and a poet's heart.

Bishop Gore was no doubt a saint—that term is ridden too hard to-day—he was also a great teacher, a courageous and able organizer, but he was also a cultured and charming human being. Like the Bishop in *Les Miserables,* he has his human weaknesses and idiosyncrasies, and we have them sympathetically chronicled in this book. We like everything about it, except the frontispiece portrait. It makes the Bishop look too much like the portrait of Cardinal Pole at Lambeth. Possibly they had something in common.

H.D.A.M.

THE CHRIST OF THE MOUNT*

A new book by Dr. Stanley Jones is sure of a welcome, perhaps not wholly untouched by misgivings lest the constant succession of books which flow from Dr. Jones' facile pen should be marked by a decline in that freshness which won for *The Christ of the Indian Road* such an astonishing popularity. But in the case of the present book, we think that such misgivings will be largely dispelled on perusal, and that it will take rank among Dr. Jones' best work.

**The Christ of the Mount.* A Working Philosophy of Life. By E. Stanley Jones. (Hodder & Stoughton. 5/-.)

It is true that there are features in the book which will irritate many readers. Epigram and illustration, excellent if used as spice, becomes overpowering if used as staple food; and in this volume, while they arrest our attention in the opening pages, they weary us (excellent though most of them be) by their very excess long before the close. Many readers will also dislike the way in which intimate personal incidents connected with figures well-known in India (whose identity is but thinly veiled by the use of initials or other references easy to interpret) are used as illustrations of high achievement or lamentable failure (p. 74, etc.); and the author's constant references to himself are only saved from being annoying because they are so obviously naïve and sincere. But perhaps all 'men with a message' are bound to appear somewhat egotistical, at least on the surface. Yet the book is not one to be lightly dismissed. From the opening pages it grips our interest and stirs our conscience. And this not merely because it comes from the pen of a master-journalist, who knows the psychology of his readers; but more, because it deals with a great theme and handles it in a masterly way. For the main theme of the book is just this: *'Does the teaching of Christ, as summarized in the Sermon on the Mount, offer us a practicable way of achieving the best in life?'*

Dr. Jones' answer to this question may be summarized as follows:—

(1) In the Sermon on the Mount, we find 'the main moral content of the word "Christian."'

(2) This content is *not* covered either by the Creeds of the Church (p. 11) or by the accepted moral standards of Christian society in our day; indeed, 'it challenges the whole underlying conception on which modern society is built,' both within and without the Church (p. 19).

(3) Though its precepts are not 'according to human nature,' as we have lived in the past, they are in accord with the deeper laws of the Universe (pp. 15, 267). He illustrates this by the story of a 'wolf-child' which, when first rescued from its four-legged foster-parents, found it 'unnatural' to walk upright, but afterwards discovered that this way was in accord with its own underlying human nature. So the 'Way of Christ' is really the way which Nature (or God) has designed for man; and by it alone man achieves his own best self.

But the revolutionary effect of attempting to apply the Sermon on the Mount to life, as we are in the habit of living it, is vividly set forth in Chapters 8 and 11; the two most pungent chapters in the book. In the former, Dr. Jones applies the principle of 'reverence for personality,' which he finds to be central in the Sermon on the Mount, to some of the most difficult types of human relationships, such as those of 'class' and 'race' in India; and in the light of this test, Brahmin and Britisher alike are tried and found wanting. In the other chapter, under the heading of 'reverence for the personalities of our enemies,' we find an unusually clear and persuasive presentation of the ideals and principles of thorough-going Pacifism.

In his unsparing condemnation of the Church of to-day for its compromise with the sub-Christian moral standards of current society, Dr. Stanley Jones is one of a large company of honest souls; but while most of them, having uttered their denunciations, are content to stand aside from organized religion, Dr. Jones flings himself into the forefront of the battle, and gallantly calls upon the Church to follow. If one may judge from the past history of the Church, it is perhaps not likely that any large number of Church members will respond and venture forth upon the dangerous road of 'taking Christ at His word.' Nevertheless, a response may well come from a few individual souls, or a few small groups, as it has come

from time to time in days gone by. And even a few, if they really take the Sermon on the Mount as their working philosophy of life, may change the face of the Church—and of the world. E.C.D.

A JAPANESE ST. FRANCIS *

Are there any religious books in this country of which it can be said that they are selling 'by the hundred thousand'? This, however, is the statement made by Dr. Kenneth Saunders, who writes an introduction to a new book by Kagawa, *New Life through God*; in Japan it is 'selling by the hundred thousand.' Those who have heard Kenneth Saunders and know something of his own idealism and vision will appreciate his attachment to Kagawa: there could be no better or more sympathetic editor. In a short introduction, he writes of the extraordinarily self-sacrificing slum-life of Kagawa, and of how through the most exacting of apprenticeships he has become an expert in the problems of poverty and of the application of the Christian Gospel to life. 'While he has been put in prison as a Labour leader and organizer of trade unions, he is now befriended by the Government and indeed embarrassed by its patronage. It is largely due to him that the article forbidding trades unionism was annulled in 1925, and that the House of Peers appropriated £3,000,000 for the rebuilding of the slum areas of six great Japanese cities' (p. 13). Readers of the *Modern Churchman* are already acquainted with many of the details of his remarkable life and mission. He is bent on absolute faithfulness to the fundamentals of the Christian Gospel, and in the light of his purpose all criticism of details of his work seems beside the point. 'Finding religion an opiate, he is making it a flame of love: finding the Church respectable, he is making it beloved.'

The book itself contains a series of platform addresses of an evangelistic character given before Japanese audiences, mostly non-Christians, sometimes students and sometimes factory-workers. There is conviction through every page, and that conviction is expounded and brought home by an amazing wealth of illustrations and anecdotes. From pain nerves to radio coils, from economic theory to constitutional law, Kagawa passes easily and freely, always bringing old truths into new light and life. The simplicity of his method and message is illustrated in the following prayer:

> 'God our Father, although we skip the places we do not understand, help us, facing Christ, to read the Bible thoughtfully and prayerfully every single morning, so that we may be taught by God. May we be led not by man's strength, but by God's strength. We pray this through Jesus Christ.'

His discursive style has its difficulties for an English reader, but, in spite of this and of the unfamiliarity of many of the topical allusions, there is a richness of experience here which makes one read on. 'And if people ask "What is the good of missions?" or "What has Christianity done in Asia?" let them find here the answer.' J.P.H.

SHORT NOTICES

Two more books have been added by the S.C.M. to the list of works 'suitable for Confirmation candidates,' and each has something to commend it. The first is a new edition of *In the Presence* (by K. F. Jones and R. M. Prichard; price 2/- and 1/-), which, by omitting all that is 'but rarely used now,' makes the setting of the Holy Communion Service more straightforward and intelligible to the young candidate. It also contains

**New Life through God.* By Toyohiko Kagawa. (S.C.M. pp. 224. Price 5/-.)

three useful forms of preparation for the Service and a short explanation of the ceremonial followed in many Churches. There is also a new and enlarged edition of the Rev. R. L. Pelly's *Aspects of the Holy Communion* (price 1/-), which is suitable for candidates of a slightly older age than that met by the former book. It contains the Service with explanatory notes, and also a series of apt devotional addresses, helpful in elucidating the value of the Holy Communion and, as it were, striking a key-note for the Service. Our only hesitation about this book is that one of the addresses spoils the series. That on 'The Bread of Life' (p. 29) covers too much ground, and its reference to Dionysus is confusing while it suggests the wrong emphasis.

It is a good, if not indispensable, practice to make one's own collection of prayers, and when this is continued carefully throughout a lifetime, the result can be striking. *Prayers New and Old* (S.C.M.; price 3/6) is the result of such a habit followed for half a century by the late Dr. A. W. Robinson, Canon of Canterbury. It is grouped under seven headings suggested by the Lord's Prayer, and contains a wealth of devotional material both in English and Latin. Each section has a few apt words of introduction. The book will help those who already have the habit referred to: and it will make others see its possibilities.

The Absurdity of Christianity (by Professor Bowman; S.C.M.; price 1/-) is an essay on the authority of the Christian religion. There is a sense in which Tertullian's words, *credo quia absurdum,* are true in that in a strictly scientific account of the universe, religion seems to have no place. Science, in all its branches, and religion are not so much mutually incompatible as mutually indifferent. But Christianity has its own system of perspectives; and Prof. Bowman, who is Professor of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow University, compares its assumptions with those of science and examines the grounds for the validity of the Christian belief.

J.P.H.

CORRESPONDENCE

TELL JOHN.

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman.*

SIR,

We are sorry that your reviewer should have received from our book *Tell John* the impression that we were being unjust to Modernism. We venture to hope that others who read our first essay may not get that impression. Since, however, we did not use the term 'Modernism' in that essay, and since the points which the review raises seem to us of considerable importance for Modernism, it may be well with your permission that we should define our position.

If there is in the world, and even in the heart of any so-called Modernists, a self-satisfied intellectualism, which rejoices in being clever in religious matters at the expense of others, and which thinks itself religious for its cleverness, we should make bold to condemn such a temper of mind, and to say that it must learn humility before God and man; but we did not, and certainly should not call it Modernism. We should rather use the word 'Modernism' for that attitude of criticism of formal religious theories, and for the search with utmost effort for truth and righteousness, which we suggested was an element of abiding necessity in any vital religion. We should not confine the name to those who are 'for ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.' We should maintain that it was fully in keeping with Modernism, for a Modernist to reach and hold and

maintain strong and clear religious convictions, provided only that he will respect in love, and will be willing where he can to learn from, the like convictions of others. Further, since we believe that God is personal, that He reveals Himself in personality in Christ, and that in His revelation He claims the response of the whole personality of man, we should refuse to make that distinction between the language of religious dogma and the language of religious devotion which your reviewer would have us make. We consider such a distinction completely alien to the spirit of the New Testament; we do not see how your reviewer can place in one class to the exclusion of the other the confession of St. Peter at Caesarea Philippi, or the saying of our Lord, 'Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven,' or the language of the Epistle to the Romans. We should maintain that your reviewer was being untrue to Modernism, and was confining it to an intellectualist humanism, if, while recognising that 'it was of the essence of a revelation that it should be understandable,' he then failed to recognize that it was not less of its essence that it should be received in trust and acted upon in love. We would claim for Modernism the wider task of so interpreting Christianity to the modern world, as to claim the response in faith of the whole personality, embracing thought and will and feeling, and of the personality as a whole. We venture to think that we should have your agreement, and that of most Modernists, in giving to Modernism this wider range and richer task.

GEOFFREY ALLEN.
ROY MCKAY.

SIR,

THE FUTURE OF ASCENSION DAY.

I read Dr. Bouquet's suggestion paper in the April number of the *Modern Churchman* under the above heading with great interest, but with some surprise that he is apparently unaware of what would have proved a useful source of information for his study, namely the publications of the Society of Psysical Research. The suggestion that apparitions may be explained as due to eternalised centrally-initiated hallucinations (although there is little if any good evidence for it) is a familiar one to the physical researcher, and this is the gist of the long quotation from Mr. Stuart Moon.

The agnostic physical researcher would attribute the Ascension Experience to a collective (possibly contagious) hallucination due to a telepathic impact from some agent's mind.

There is a mass of evidence for apparitions of dying and deceased persons, the majority referable to the dying and recently dead, which are explained as due to the telepathic agency (possibly deferred in expression) of the dying but still living persons. But there is a significant residuum of well-authenticated cases (*i.e.* phantoms of the long deceased) that cannot plausibly be so explained.

There is, further, a growing body of significant evidence of several kinds based on communications made through sensitives (mediums) of unimpeachable integrity which points more and more clearly to discernate agency and intelligence.

The upshot is that many critical materialist or agnostic students of the subject have found in the carefully investigated evidence basis for at least a growing conviction of Survival and for belief that the recorded Easter- and Ascension-tide experiences are founded on fact. Also that the after-life is one of Progress, with a consummation in (*pace* Aristotle) what St. Paul calls the Seventh Heaven: perfected At-one-ment.

ERNEST S. THOMAS.

'THE GROUPS AND DEUTERONOMY.'

SIR,

If 'A China Missionary' will read a little further than Chapter xiii of the book of Deuteronomy he will find the following words at Chapter xviii, vv. 21 *f.* :—

> 'And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him.'

J. S. BEZZANT.

Exeter College, Oxford.

THE BRISTOL CONFERENCE.

I venture to enclose a programme of the Modern Churchmen's Conference to be held in Bristol, September 5—10, 1932, and to express the hope that many of our readers will be able to attend it.

These Annual Conferences were instituted nearly twenty years ago to serve the cause of enlightened religion and to assist both religious teachers and religious students, as well as Church people generally. The ensuing publication of the Conference papers secures a wide and influential publicity, and in this respect there has been a steady extension of the Conference's usefulness. On the other hand, the level of the Conference discussions has declined. This is due to the absence of some who could raise the level of debate by judicious criticisms. The general public attends well, and we are glad to see them there, but what we need particularly for our sake and theirs are religious teachers and students, clerical and lay. I venture to appeal to two classes particularly :—

(1) *The parochial clergy, especially the younger clergy.*

Could a portion of the parson's holiday be better spent than at the Modern Churchmen's Conference? The Conference Week (Monday to Saturday) would provide a welcome break in the routine of parish work, and would introduce the parson not only to many new ideas, but also to a number of interesting and congenial acquaintances.

(2) *Those engaged in educational work.*

Training the young includes a serious consideration of moral and religious problems and their practical solution in the light of modern knowledge. No Conference provides more help in this matter than the Modern Churchmen's.

I am aware that in making this appeal I am asking much. Times are financially hard, and people have little to spend on holidays. I would only plead that if a holiday be taken our Conference should be selected for it. I would also add that the programme provided for the Bristol Conference is a most promising one.

HENRY D. A. MAJOR
(Chairman of the Modern Churchmen's Conference Committee).

CORRECTION.

The following corrections should be made in Dr. Bouquet's article, 'The Future of Ascension Day,' in our April number :—

p. 27, ll. 10, 14, for *Elae* and *Elaes* read *Elaea.*

p. 32, l. 8, for *Mr. Stuart Moon* read *Mrs. Stuart Moore.*

p. 33, l. 29, for *not transcended or reversed* read *both transcended and reversed.*

ED., *M.C.*